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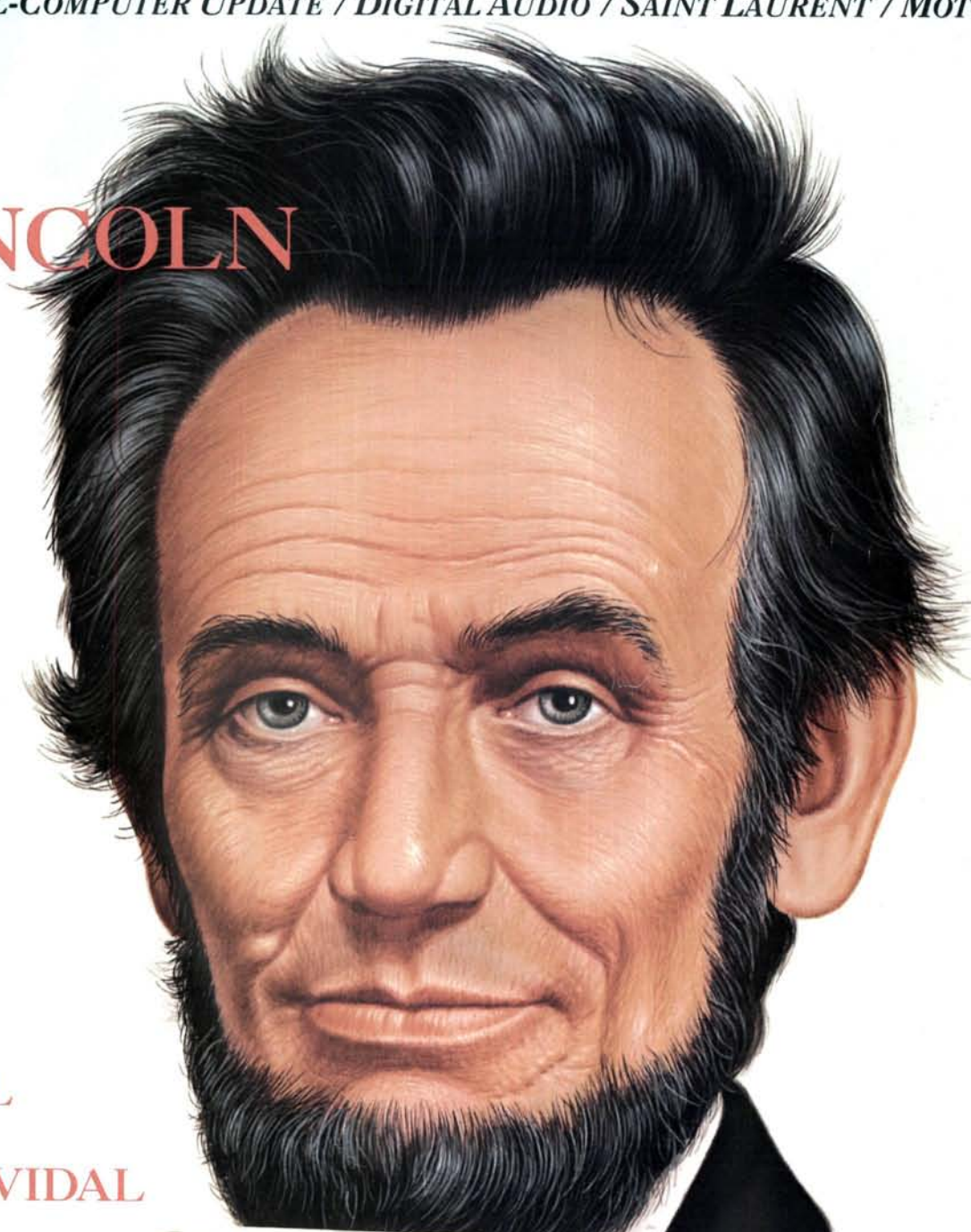
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APR 16 1984

PERSONAL-COMPUTER UPDATE / DIGITAL AUDIO / SAINT LAURENT / MOTOWN

LINCOLN

A
NOVEL
BY
GORE VIDAL

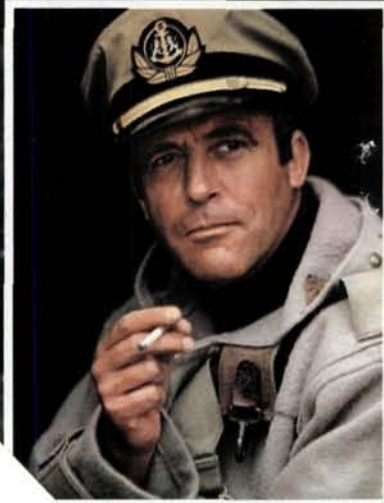


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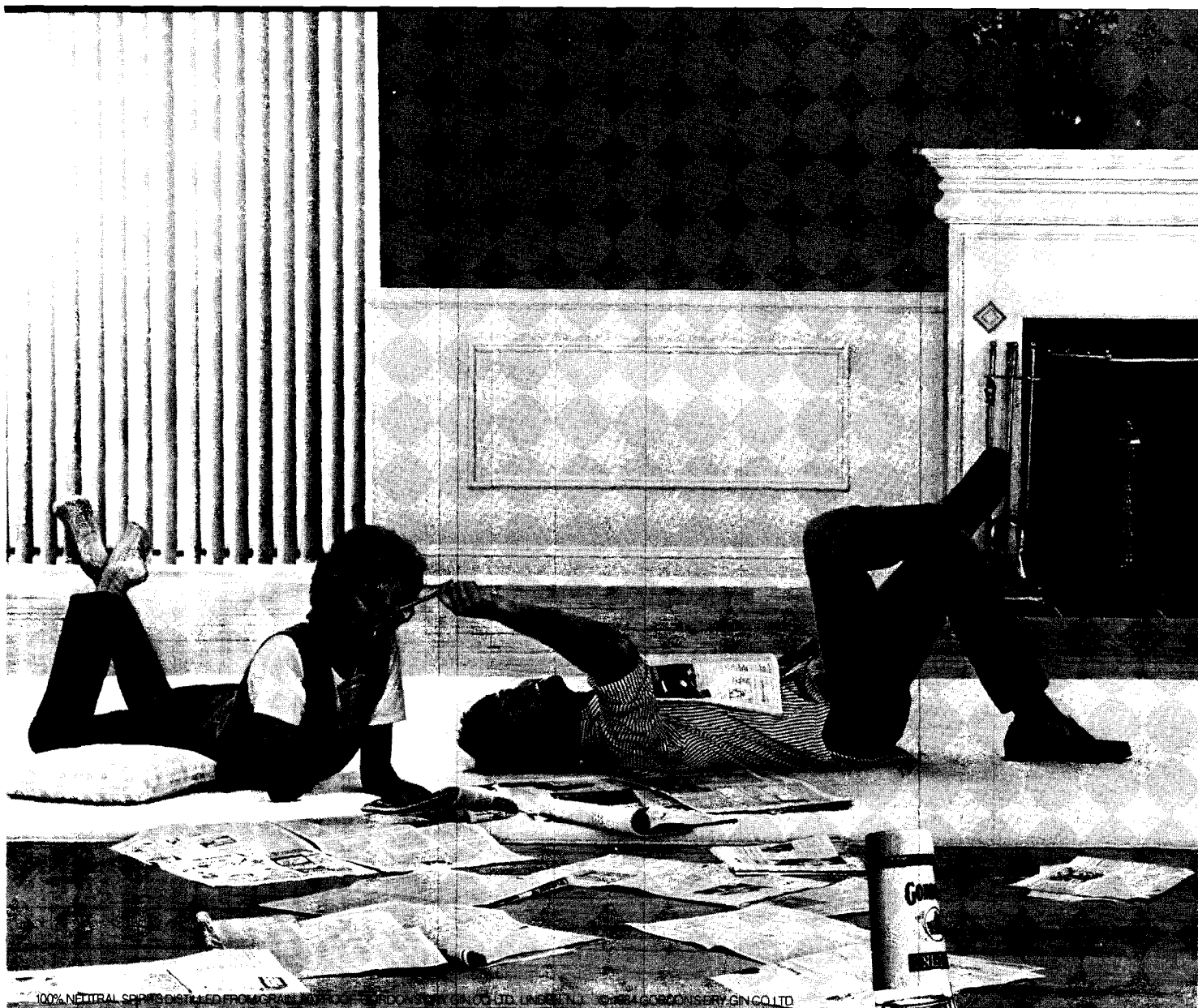
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FREUD'S SEDUCTION THEORY

Jeffrey Masson's article "Freud and the Seduction Theory" (February *Atlantic*) leaves me wondering whether I ought to think of psychoanalysis as a science or as a religion. Certainly Masson does not examine his subject in a scientific manner.

If, for example, a physicist doubted the theory of relativity, he would check the theory's internal consistency, examine the relevant experimental data, and possibly construct new experiments to gather additional data. He would not microscopically examine Einstein's correspondence to see if the great man had some ulterior motive for proposing his theory. Such an *ad hominem* argument would have no place in a scientific discussion. If the theory is logically consistent and seems to fit the data, who cares why Einstein formulated it or even whether he believed it.

But why and how Freud abandoned the seduction theory seems to be *all* that Masson cares about. In his long, dry article, he presents not one whit of evidence for or against the seduction hypothesis. In the long history of psychoanalysis, are there no relevant case histories more detailed and more convincing (not to mention more recent) than Masson's speculative reconstruction of Freud's treatment of Emma Eckstein? Are there no studies of child abuse that could be correlated to the incidence of certain types of mental illness? Do therapists who still believe the seduction hypothesis have more success than orthodox psychoanalysts? A clever researcher might find any number of ways to examine the seduction hypothesis on its merits, but Masson makes no attempt to do so. Instead, we are subjected to an excruciatingly detailed analysis of Freud's letters to Fliess—not because they contain ideas of scientific or philosophical merit but because they are supposed to cast light on Freud's state of mind.

If Masson can "challenge the foundations of psychoanalysis" with nothing but biographical evidence, it becomes clear that he believes psychoanalysis is founded not on reasoning or data but on the life of Freud. Indeed, his entire article makes much more sense if one looks on psychoanalysis not as a science, or

even as an art, but as a religion revealed by God through his prophet Sigmund Freud.

If Masson really seeks the "root of the present-day sterility of psychoanalysis," he will not find it in the seduction theory or its abandonment. The explanation is, rather, that psychoanalysts have canonized their founder and abandoned the fertile scientific principles he tried to practice.

DOUGLAS MUDER
Chicago, Ill.

Jeffrey Masson's article was fascinating! I must, however, take exception to his conclusions on three counts.

Mr. Masson fails to stipulate whether "psychoanalysis," as the word is used in his conclusions, refers specifically to treatment by the followers of Freud or to psychological treatment in general. Masson says, "Most therapies are based, openly or implicitly, on Freudian theory." Being an Adlerian, I feel my stomach churning at that thought, but if Mr. Masson believes most psychotherapy to be derived from Freud, so be it.

That being the case, perhaps Freud, when he abandoned the seduction theory, did abandon "an important truth: that sexual, physical, and emotional violence is a real and tragic part of the lives of many children." However, to conclude that analysts (most psychotherapists?) deal with accounts of childhood trauma as fantasies is a gross generalization.

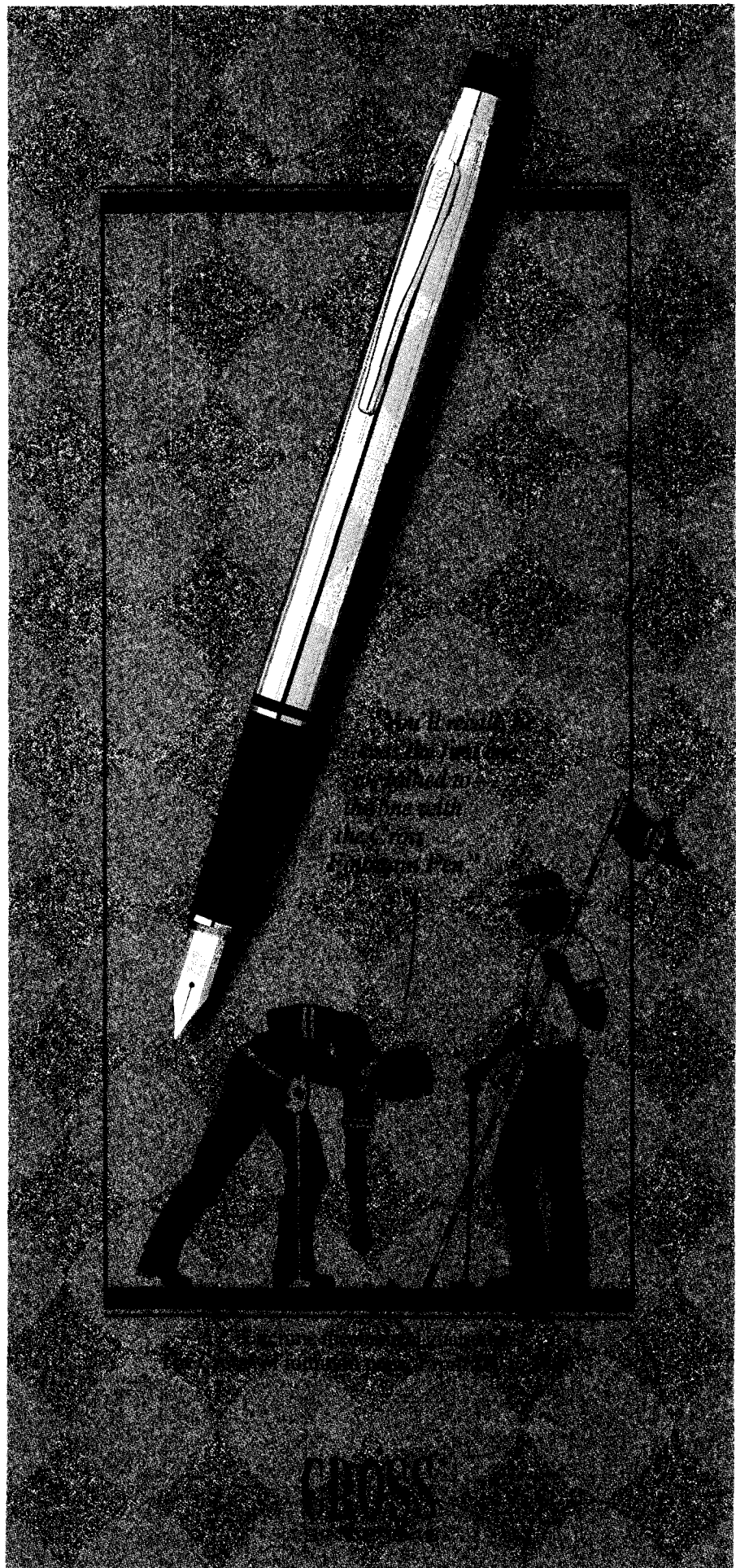
To conclude that those of us "entrusted with the lives of people in emotional pain" perpetuate earlier abuse is a giant step backward. The distinction between fantasy and reality, while not always clear, assumes less importance if one holds the view that a person's reality is shaped by his or her own beliefs, whether those beliefs are true or not. Further, those beliefs are acted upon as if they were real. My colleagues and I believe that instances of early abuse are treated as real. We have come to the point of establishing credibility in our being sensitive and understanding of the potential devastation of early abuse. I hate to see it lost so easily.

E. W. JACOBS
*Piedmont College
Demorest, Ga.*

Masson sets up a false dichotomy: either many neurotic patients had in fact been sexually abused by their parents (as Freud initially believed) or "the parents had not done anything to their children in reality." In the first instance, the parents are to blame; in the second instance, if the patient's recollections are largely fantasies, the parents are absolved and the "blame" lies with the patient's primitive erotic and aggressive impulses. Masson ignores the possibility that both situations may be true. That is, certain parents may abuse their children, or unwittingly involve them in the parents' neurotic conflicts, and children might, for complex reasons, react to and distort "actual" events in their infantile fantasies. Indeed, this seems to be the position taken by a good many contemporary psychotherapists.

The goal of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy today is no longer to "lift repressed memories" or to "reconstruct the past" but rather to help patients come to terms with those troublesome aspects of their past that continue to exert adverse influence on their functioning as adults. Unquestionably, most patients who seek psychotherapy have suffered unfortunate experiences in childhood—poor mothering, mistreatment by a tyrannical father, death of a parent, or any of many other traumas. The decisive question for therapy is not whether these events actually happened or who is to blame. In part, therapy seeks to alleviate the patient's hurt by providing a "corrective emotional experience"; in part, the patient must face the fact that while his or her reactions in childhood are understandable and perhaps entirely appropriate, they are no longer adaptive. That, precisely, is the patient's problem: he or she continues to treat the present as if it were the past, often with catastrophic consequences. When all is said and done, the therapist must say something like this: "We both have some understanding of what happened to you. Your parents clearly had serious problems and deficiencies; they failed to meet your needs adequately. However, what can be done about it today? In one way or another you have to accept your anger, your rage, your losses. What matters is the present, not the past. There is nothing anyone can do to change the past. But there may be a great deal you can do about the present and the future."

Masson's dichotomy is of little value to the practicing therapist, and it provides an inaccurate and misleading picture of





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HANS H. STRUPP
*Distinguished Professor of Psychology
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tenn.*

As I read your February cover story on Freud's seduction theory, I was filled with what Freud would have called "impotent rage." I am a psychologist and have argued with teachers and peers for several years that many of Freud's theories are sexist and brutally perpetuate the painful domination of men over women. No one, until recently, has agreed with me. Now I find the beginnings of support all around me. The public's consciousness of the ugly reality of sexual abuse of children is dawning in the professional as well as the popular press.

Jeffrey Masson's article showed clearly the camaraderie of psychoanalysts, the conspiracy to maintain the old-boy network, at the expense of many women in deep emotional pain. I always am looking for signs of sexual abuse in my clients, and because of my openness to it, I do find it. My hope is that more will become open to it because of this article and others like it.

SHARON HAMPSON
Watkins, Iowa

Seldom when the truth threatens to shake the foundations of an organizational structure as powerful as that of psychoanalysis—or, for that matter, the foundations of the mores of society itself—does the seer have the courage to speak up. Jeffrey Masson brings to the forefront an idea that has been in the back of my mind for some time: although psychoanalysis has freed many people from sexual repression, the psychoanalytical process contains a negative force in its underlying assumption that the patient's only enemy is herself. (I say "herself" because most patients are women.) The virtual victimization of Emma Eckstein at the hands of Freud and Fliess is a classic example of how psychology can be misused to "keep women in their place." Feminists know that women have been blamed for everything from sexually desiring their fathers and inviting rape to fantasizing their oppressed state; that psychoanalysis should feed into that does not surprise me.

That more sexual attacks are committed by men against young girls than by women against young boys seems certain. That Freud most likely dissembled

when he suggested that the women who were his patients had fantasized the sexual assaults by their fathers seems symbolic of what some men would have us believe: that women are not oppressed. We have, in effect, been seduced by our fathers into believing that if we are neurotic we have no one to blame but ourselves. Although I realize that Masson did not intend his piece to be a feminist essay, he has taken a stand for women by taking a stand for those who are oppressed by the inconsistencies in psychoanalysis. He has made a stand for truth, which is what psychoanalysis professes to be all about.

BONNIE KATLIN HANGER
Grand Rapids, Mich.

CARPING HACKERS

At the risk of turning so august a journal as *The Atlantic* into yet another forum for carping hackers, I must take issue with James Fallows's article on WordStar in your January issue. In the absence—one presumes—of resident experts on the subject, Mr. Fallows's recent comments on the hexadecimal arcana of WordStar's source code were printed as though they were in fact correct.

In addition to the ad your very with-it marketing people placed in *InfoWorld* (the product to which you refer in that ad is called "Customization Notes," not "Customization Rates"), the article in question is a sea of error. CP/M is an abbreviation for Control Program/Monitor, not "Control Program for Microprocessors." The hexadecimal sequence 8,9,A,B,C,D,E,F counts from 8 to 15, not from "8 to 10." In displaying his admirable knowledge of WordStar's inner workings, Mr. Fallows appears to be addressing the patching requirements of a now-outdated release of WordStar. Version 3.3 allows all of those problems that so vex Mr. Fallows to be changed during installation, without any need to poke around in the code. In fact, variables such as characters-per-inch and page offset can be changed with a few keystrokes even in the earliest versions of WordStar.

RICHARD O. CURTIS
Rosindale, Mass.

Now you have published an essay that, within thirty minutes of my reading it, made a measurable change in the felt quality of my experienced life. I refer, of course, to James Fallows's piece

on WordStar. I had already done a certain amount of customized configuring of my copy of WordStar (which I am running off CP/M on an Apple IIe), but Mr. Fallows's suggestions permitted me to do a bit more fine tuning, so that at this moment, as I compose my letter, I am in his debt.

A word of warning to those who would follow Mr. Fallows's technical guidelines. At least in my installation and customization program, it is necessary to give the labels of the locations at which changes are to be made, not the addresses. For example, "right margin," which Fallows correctly locates at location 380, is labeled INITRM (for initial right margin). Merely giving the address produces a puzzled reply from the computer, viz.: No address with this label?

ROBERT PAUL WOLFF
Belmont, Mass.

James Fallows replies:

Mr. Curtis is right about the ad, for which I claim no responsibility. On his other points, he is wrong, wrong, and half right. The company that produces CP/M, Digital Research, says that the initials stand for "Control Program for Microprocessors." As for the sequence I presented (8, 9, A, B, C, D, E, F, 10), it runs from 8 to 16 in decimal notation, which I was explicitly not referring to, and from 8 to 10 in hexadecimal notation, as my article made clear. The latest updating of WordStar, version 3.3, does permit the user to make many of the changes I mention. There is one intriguing omission: it does not let you reduce the interminable display time for MicroPro's copyright notice. It is a step forward for anyone who is willing to pay \$495 for a new copy of WordStar or who has one of the computers (including the IBM Personal Computer) for which MicroPro offers to update old programs (the fee is \$85). It does nothing for the tens of thousands of other people who have older versions of WordStar, especially since MicroPro stopped selling its customization notes when it released the new version of the program. For such people, myself included, there is no alternative but to make "patches" like those I described.

TROUBLE AMID PLENTY

Stephen Budiansky has raised some sound questions concerning agricultural-research funding and the direction of future research ("Trouble Amid Plenty," January *Atlantic*). However, he has failed to address one very basic ecological concept that limits American farmers' ability to produce: carrying capacity.

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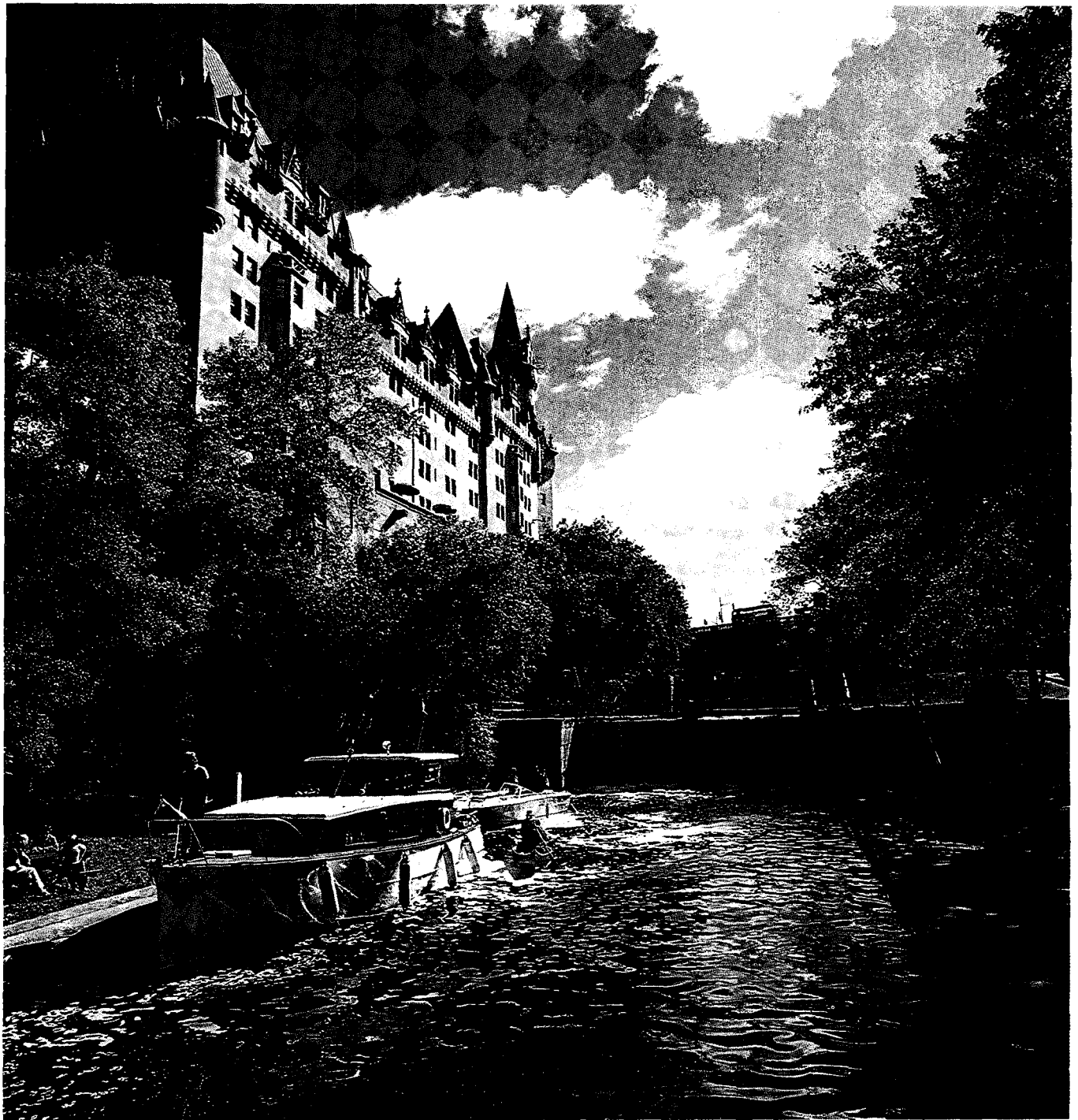
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It should not be surprising that yields have "leveled off in the past few years." Crop production has risen to a level such that increases are measured not in bushels but in grams. There is a limit to the amount of corn one can produce from an acre of land. At the highest levels of agricultural production, the cost of further yield increases is in many cases prohibitively expensive.

To presume that agricultural experiment stations should redirect their energies toward molecular biology is a noble supposition, but if agricultural experiment stations don't solve "short-term site-specific and crop-specific" problems, who will? Although the concept of farming is long-term, the practice of farming is short-term. In a business where an annual crop can be wiped out in a ten-minute hailstorm, or the difference between showing a profit and losing your butt is determined by the weather at harvest time, fast answers to "short-term site-specific" problems are a welcome relief to many farmers. Land-grant universities get a respectable portion of their funding and support from regional farmers and ranchers. I think these supporters deserve and expect research results that they can put to use to keep their heads above water.

DARRELL D. GRANBOIS
Glasgow, Mont.

Living in the upper Midwest, I fail to see how research on large mechanical harvesting equipment for lettuce, tomatoes, and oranges has anything to do with the economic problems of American agriculture. Could it be that fertilizer and pesticide costs have increased because the cost of oil has increased? Could it be that farmers are having financial trouble because of the cost of money? Interest rates and the strong dollar have more impact on farming in the United States than do hard tomatoes.

I disagree that large equipment is the cause of soil erosion in America. Farmers rip out shelter belts and plow grasslands because they receive so few dollars for their crops. Pay them to conserve, and they will. Get the prices of corn and wheat up, and they will stop planting soybeans, a very erosive crop to grow.

Perhaps agricultural research is so far behind medical research because medical people split at least a billion dollars among themselves to research one mammal—man—while agricultural workers split \$179 million to work on many crops and animals. Give the agricultural peo-

ple a billion dollars, and you would see a tremendous increase in basic information. The problem with the present system is not that it is outdated but that it is underfunded.

I don't see that molecular biology can provide a permanent solution to problems like disease resistance. Genes for disease resistance have already been "engineered" into our crops, and they are inevitably compromised by new strains of the disease. Molecular biology may in fact be more costly than achieving results through other techniques.

Plant molecular technology is one of the many tools that agricultural researchers can use to increase the quantity and quality of food. It is not a panacea for all the insect, weed, soil, fertility, economic, and disease problems in crop production.

JEFFREY L. GELLNER
Brookings, S.D.

Emphasizing micro biological research will not fully serve the complex needs of our agricultural system. We have reached the end of the era of tremendous yield increases through simple changes in cultural practice (e.g., fertilizing or irrigating) or through the introduction of "green revolution" cultivars. We must be realistic and accept the fact that future yield increases will be small; it is doubtful that we can radically alter a plant, through micro biological techniques, to cause nonrhizobious plants to fix nitrogen or to incorporate the C_4 photosynthetic pathway into species that currently fix carbon through the less efficient C_3 pathway. We must also evaluate whether a yield increase is our goal. In many environments, it may be more advantageous to increase irrigation—or water-use efficiency.

What should be encouraged and funded is interdisciplinary plant research. Such work will lead to more efficient and effective plant-breeding and genetic-engineering programs. For example, a plant breeder may employ a soil-plant-atmosphere continuum model to help him decide which architectural features should be changed to promote an increase in carbon-dioxide uptake. Interdisciplinary research is also fundamental in conducting studies on integrated pest management and in understanding plant biophysics.

I do agree that a competitive grant system fosters better basic research. Funds supporting such research should be increased. On the other hand, applied re-

search and research on specialty crops should not be abandoned. Much valued information is produced in such studies. Farmers need to know the best pruning techniques, the best planting densities and fertilization-application rates. Such studies would be neglected if funding dollars were radically redistributed.

DENNIS BALDOCCHI
Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Stephen Budiansky replies:

Critics of the agricultural-research system agree wholeheartedly with Darrell Granbois: state experiment stations must continue to carry out applied research that addresses local farmers' immediate needs. But that does not alter the fact that the system has become a WPA project for mediocre scientists. Funds are handed out according to a no-questions-asked, share-the-wealth philosophy that may be good politics but is lousy science policy. Unless America's agricultural-research system is brought into the twentieth century—with peer-reviewed grants, open to the nation's best scientists and not just to a protected club—there won't be any new knowledge for the applied researchers to put into practice.

The evidence suggests that we are reaching limits imposed by ignorance, not by ecology. We can achieve yield improvements in areas such as pest resistance and drought tolerance. Molecular biology holds the promise of such advances, and at an affordable price.

Jeffrey Gellner is unquestionably correct in attributing farmers' financial troubles to the cost of oil and of money. It's also correct to say of the fellow who drowned in the creek that the cause of death was rain. Genetically engineered crop improvements could overcome farmers' current exclusive dependence on expensive and energy-intensive inputs (such as chemical fertilizer and pesticides).

Mr. Gellner is correct, too, that a billion dollars for agricultural research would produce results. Unfortunately, that is not an option. I have tried to point out weaknesses where modest changes could yield large dividends in a system that is ripe for reform. The Reagan Administration, in its 1985 budget, has taken a first step by proposing to triple the funding for competitive grants in agricultural research while holding automatic funding to the experiment stations almost constant.

To clear up a misunderstanding about the "permanence" of genetic-engineering solutions: Mr. Gellner is right that all pest controls are eventually circumvented by the pest through evolutionary adaptations. Genetic solutions are "permanent" only in the sense that, once incorporated into a seed, they do not have to be manufactured from scratch each year—as chemical pesticides do.



REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES

NOSTALGIA FOR THE DARK AGES

The number of college courses on medieval subjects is rising, and clubs devoted to medieval pursuits are proliferating across the land

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, Maryland, is a triangular piece of turf defined by the confluence of the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River. Settled by high-born English papists in 1634, it is the oldest jurisdiction in the state. On a recent visit to St. Mary's, I noticed a banner slung above Route 5, scored here and there by half-moon incisions to accommodate gusts of wind. It advertised a jousting tournament to be held at Horse Range Farm, in the town of Mechanicsville.

Jousting is not unusual in Maryland. Thanks to the efforts of Henry Fowler, the master of Horse Range Farm, who for many years represented his county in the

House of Delegates, the joust has since 1962 been Maryland's official state sport, although combatants eager to be "well scene at armes" now spear dangling rings rather than "tourney one against one, or two against two," as William Caxton would have had them do in the fifteenth century. Even so, hundreds of Marylanders have gamely taken up the lance.

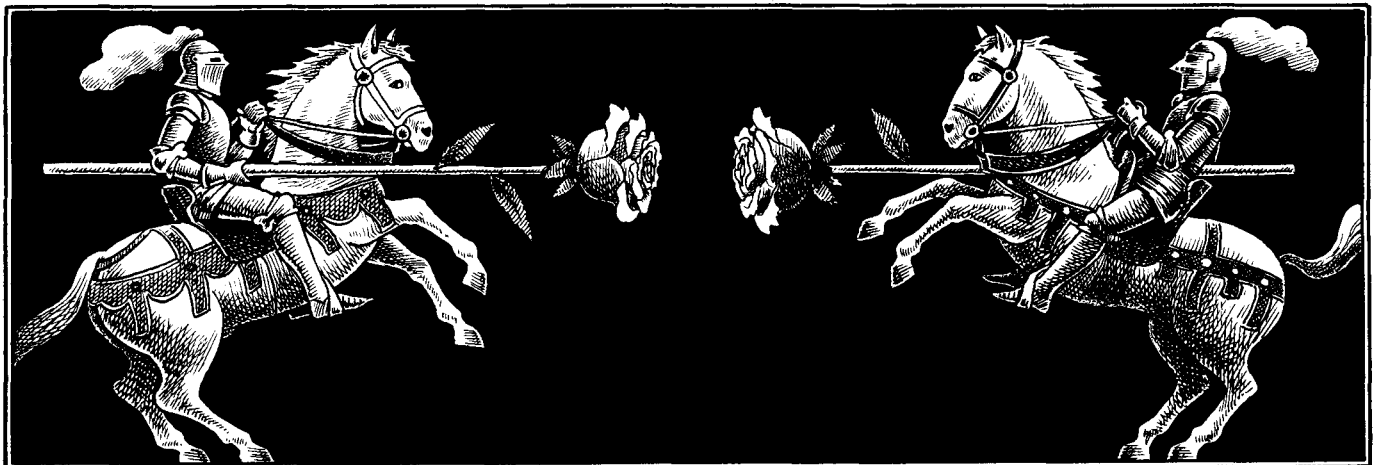
They are not alone, at least not in spirit, for the rehabilitation of the medieval has been under way in the United States for some time. Long derided as "Dark," and consigned by Peter Mark Roget in his thesaurus to a forlorn suborder of the category "Ignorance," the Middle Ages today are downright fashionable. Symbolic of this change in fortune is the success of Umberto Eco's medieval thriller, *The Name of the Rose*. Replete with untranslated Latin apothegms and daunting disquisitions on scholastic philosophy, the novel has nevertheless sold 300,000 hardback copies (at \$15.95 apiece) and has graced *The New York Times's* best-seller list for almost a year.

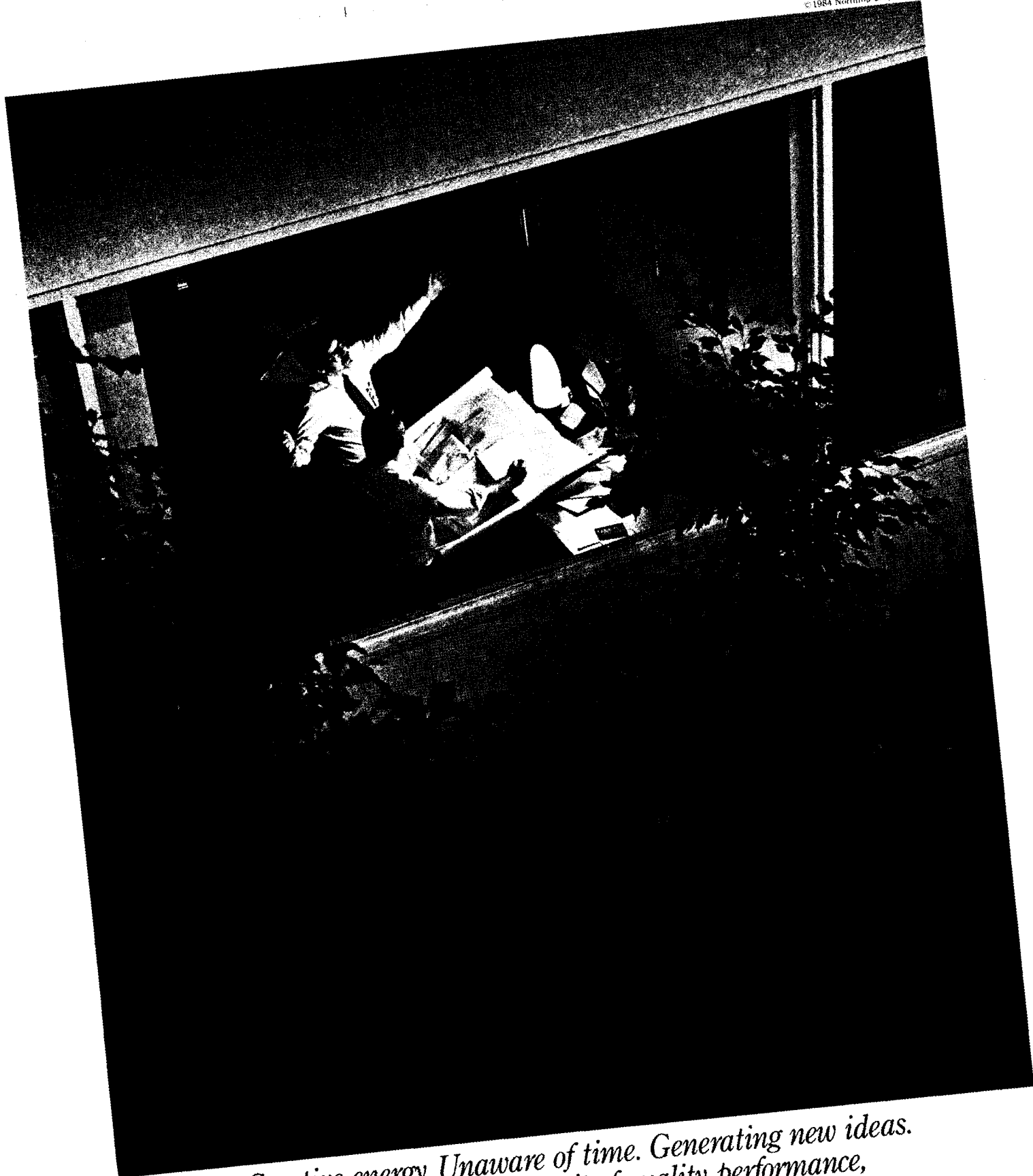
In academe, the number of courses on medieval subjects has been on the rise for several years, as has the number of students taking them. According to a sur-

vey by the medievalists Christopher Kleinhenz and Frank Gentry, during the decade ending in 1980 thirty-seven new scholarly journals specializing in the Middle Ages commenced publication. Since 1970, attendance at the annual conference of the Medieval Institute, at Western Michigan University, in Kalamazoo, has swelled from 800 to almost 2,000, making it the largest medieval *congressus* in the world.

Meanwhile, clubs and confraternities dedicated to medieval pursuits have proliferated across the continent: the Harlotry Players (Ann Arbor), the Society for Creative Anachronism (Berkeley), the Poculi Ludique Societas (Toronto), the International Early Dance and Music Institute (Amherst), and scores of others. Groups like these, some of them more serious than others, sponsor tournaments and revels, masques and mystery plays, seminars and summer schools—all in an attempt, as the Society for Creative Anachronism would have it, "to create a total medieval environment."

This sort of thing has of late been creeping out of the university towns and into affluent suburbs. On the verdant fringes of the nation's 323 Standard Met-





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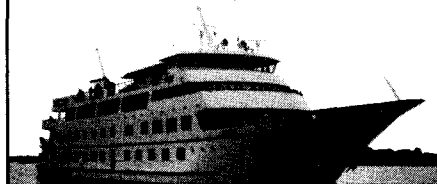
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ropolitan Statistical Areas, hardly a weekend now passes without jugglers, buffoons, mummers, and minstrels strutting about in some public park. As enthusiasts in period costume dance a saltarello to the strains of cithara and bombulum, onlookers may sample black pudding and turnip jam and fend off the chill with noggins of hippocras and perry.

ARE THE MIDDLE AGES worth the fuss? In Kingsley Amis's novel *Lucky Jim*, the protagonist, a lecturer in medieval history, delivered one opinion, and at first glance his argument seems compelling: "Those who [profess] themselves unable to believe in the reality of human progress ought to cheer themselves up . . . by a short study of the Middle Ages. The hydrogen bomb, the South African Government, Chiang Kai-shek, Senator McCarthy himself, would then seem a light price to pay for no longer being in the Middle Ages. Had people ever been as nasty, as self-indulgent, as dull, as miserable, as cocksure, as bad at art, as dismally ludicrous, or as wrong" as they had been during the Middle Ages? Possibly not, a fair-minded person is bound to admit.

Indeed, in certain respects, the medieval period seems to have been a calamity, the ill effects of which have persisted to this day. Writing in the newsletter *Humanities* in 1982, the historian Norman Cantor argued that sizable chunks of our medieval legacy will have to be jettisoned "if the world is to become peaceful and secure or even to endure." He cited as examples "the dead hand of bureaucratic oppression," a rigid social hierarchy, "violence against peaceful minorities," and "imperialist greed" spurred by religious intolerance. But Cantor discerned gold amid the dross. He noted that the jury system, common law, parliamentary institutions, the hospital, the university, and the "high market value for the skills of artists and scholars" are all medieval hand-me-downs. To this list one might add scores of other worthwhile innovations that have not survived: among them the ducking stool, the king's touch for scrofula, the *droit du seigneur*, and the practice of fining college professors who lecture past the bell, skip portions of the syllabus, or fail to attract at least five students to each class.

My own view is that, in his haste to leave the Middle Ages behind, Western man discarded much that was of value, junking countless customs, institutions, and serviceable quirks of sentiment that

might easily have been adapted (with happy results) to the altered conditions of subsequent centuries. Fortunately, it is not too late to set things aright. Given the current popular esteem for the Middle Ages, the time may be ripe for a revival of useful practices sadly fallen into desuetude—a bit of backpedaling, as it were, in the interest of progress.

For example, there has been much talk in recent years about requiring the young to perform some sort of "national service." Surely we might consider instead dusting off the old *corvée*, which entitled a lord of the manor to an unspecified number of days of what we now would call "community service" from every tenant in his seignury. With nary a day's warning, Bodo could be called on by his master to plant a hedge or plow a new assart, and Bodo's wife might be summoned to the "big house" to help with the cooking and sewing. An updated, democratized *corvée*, run by local governments or perhaps by the Salvation Army, has its possibilities. The conscripts might even receive modest compensation. As the historian Marc Bloch noted in his book *French Rural History*, "Although compulsory, work done as a *corvée* was not necessarily unrewarded; the lord was sometimes obliged to provide refreshments."

In the realm of jurisprudence, trial by ordeal would certainly help clear the dockets. "Tell me, pray," demanded Saint Bernard in his *De Consideratione*, "what is the good of litigating from morning till evening, or of listening to litigants?" Eight centuries later, we still have no acceptable answer. While trial by ordeal is plainly unsuitable in criminal proceedings (where right, often as not, has already succumbed to might), it could prompt speedier resolution of corporate lawsuits and deter nuisance libel actions. Imagine the time, money, and aggravation that could be saved if General William Westmoreland and Mike Wallace, or Lillian Hellman and Mary McCarthy, instead of hunkering down to protracted litigation, were each required to grasp a bar of red-hot iron, with the judge ruling in favor of the party whose hand was not burned.

As for foreign relations, we would all breathe easier for a new Truce of God. The Truce of God initially forbade warfare only on Sundays, but the prohibition was later broadened by the Church to include the six weeks of Lent as well as every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday (the theory being that good Christians need-

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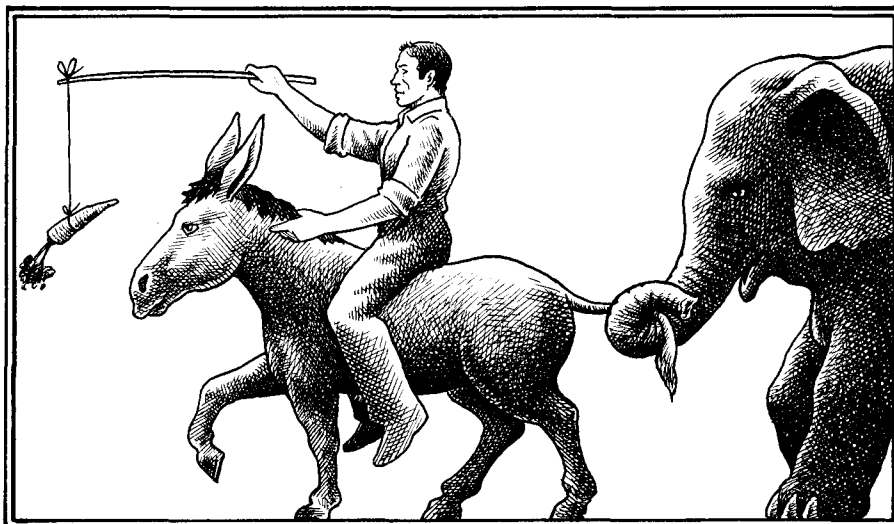
ed three full days to prepare for Sunday worship). Applying this rule to the Jewish Saturday and the Moslem Friday, and throwing in Ramadan and all of the festivals and High Holy Days, along with the various Hindu *utsavas* and the many Buddhist anniversaries and *uposatha* celebrations, we would be left with only an occasional Monday on which to come to blows.

Regarding the conduct of our daily affairs, the monastic *Regula Sancti Benedicti*, composed by Saint Benedict during the sixth century A.D., still has much sound advice to offer. "If you have a dispute with someone, make peace with him before the sun goes down." "Do not love immoderate or boisterous laughter." "As often as boys and the young . . . are guilty of misdeeds, they should be subjected to severe fasts or checked with sharp strokes."

Which of us, moreover, has never been thwarted, frustrated, or misled by the curt receptionist, the vapid ticket clerk, the officious lobby guard, the obstinate bureaucrat, and other inhabitants of post-industrial America's waxing Cerberus sector? Here again we would do well to heed the sage Saint Benedict. He advised his brethren, "At the door of the monastery, place a sensible old man who knows how to take a message and deliver a reply. . . . As soon as anyone knocks, or a poor man calls out, he replies 'Thanks be to God' or 'Your blessing, please'; then, with all the gentleness that comes from the fear of God, he provides a prompt answer with the warmth of love."

—Cullen Murphy

Cullen Murphy is a senior editor of *The Wilson Quarterly*.



WASHINGTON

GETTING OUT THE VOTE

The drive to register new voters is based on assumptions that may well prove false

IN POLITICS, 1984 has become the year of voter registration. Not since the civil-rights movement has the nation seen such a wave of registration drives. Inspired by their opposition to President Ronald Reagan, perhaps two dozen organizations representing minorities, women, the poor, labor, nuclear-freeze advocates, and gays have set out to enlist new voters. The new technology of politics,

with its computerized lists, computerized letters, and even computerized telephone calls, allows distinct segments of the electorate—blacks, environmentalists, college-educated women, fundamentalists, and so on—to be identified and exhorted to register and vote. In a period of low turnout but close contests, the side that registers and turns out the most voters is the side that wins. Voter registration is thus transformed from an instrument of good government into a potent political weapon.

With this discovery, activists have begun to dream anew of fundamental changes in American politics. John Anderson, this time running for President as a third-party candidate, pins his hopes on the nearly 50 percent of the electorate that did not vote in 1980—"the turned-off Americans." The Citizens Party,

which ran Barry Commoner for President in 1980, likewise targets those who have dropped out. A leaflet from Project Vote declares that "27 million Americans with family incomes under \$10,000, and 22 million minority citizens, are old enough to vote. Today, most of this enormous power is thrown away; only one out of every four low-income people vote . . . LOW-INCOME AND MINORITY VOTERS CAN CHANGE THE SHAPE OF AMERICAN POLITICS—IF THEY VOTE!"

Similarly ambitious dreams have been articulated by Richard A. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, co-authors of several books on politics and the poor, and the founders of a registration organization called Human Serve. "Nonvoters tend to be concentrated at the bottom of American society," Cloward and Piven write. "Large numbers of nonvoters entering the electoral system might well force a party realignment along class lines"—poor and working-class Democrats squared off against middle- and upper-class Republicans.

Cloward and Piven hope to register 5 million voters this year (an extremely ambitious goal), primarily by enlisting welfare workers and other government employees to sign people up in welfare offices, in food-stamp lines, and in the offices of other state agencies. Jesse Jackson's Southern Crusade, an offshoot of Operation PUSH, hopes to register between 1.5 and 2 million voters by November. The AFL-CIO, which claims to have registered 3.5 million voters in 1982, has computerized its entire nationwide membership roster so that it can identify and register those still not on the rolls.

Efforts such as these are driven by a series of assumptions. Most of those active in voter registration assume, for instance, that blacks vote far less often than their white counterparts; hence, they make blacks a special target of their registration campaigns. Most believe, as the Project Vote leaflet declares, that nonvoters "can change the shape of American politics—if they vote." Many assume, having read of the gender gap, that an increase in the number of female voters would also give the electorate a different character. And most of the true believers are convinced that if enough nonvoters can be registered, President Reagan will be defeated.

These assumptions, however, are founded more on fiction than on fact. Voter registration is important, but it is not enough.

Are "schoolboy scuffles" in the White House damaging Reagan's chances to achieve world peace?



"My frankness may startle."

believes, may prevent it.

And so, saddened and alarmed, he has written his *Caveat*.

"My frankness may startle," Haig predicts. It will.

For he speaks bluntly about the "schoolboy scuffles for personal advantage" among Reagan aides. They have produced, he declares, "an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust" — and, in foreign affairs, "flawed results" as the pillars of the policy Haig tried to establish were

When Alexander M. Haig, Jr., became U.S. Secretary of State, he saw in President Reagan "a figure who possessed great gifts of leadership—an honest mind, a good heart, a sound conception of America, and the common touch."

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"shaken by the Samsons of populism and petty ambition."

Haig's account of his stormy tenure as Secretary of State is salted with wit and graced with thoughtful insights, as he discusses the AWACS controversy...China... Poland...the Falklands crisis...and the "mixed signals" that bedeviled our Lebanon experience.

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MACMILLAN

Consider first the black vote. As of 1982, the turnout rate of blacks lagged only 7 percent behind that of whites. But among blacks and whites of similar age, education, and income levels, the proportion of blacks who vote is actually higher than the proportion of whites.

Why do so many blacks vote? First, because blacks, particularly in the South, had to fight for the right to vote; thus, they value it. Second, because that struggle left blacks in much of the South well organized; thus, registration drives and get-out-the-vote efforts are by now second nature. And third, because blacks believe in their party. According to a study of voting patterns done by ABC News in 1983, three quarters of all blacks call themselves Democrats, and three quarters of those black Democrats call themselves strong Democrats. When people believe in something on the ballot—a candidate, a cause, a party—they vote.

The social characteristic that most affects one's attitude toward voting is not race but class. (Age is another important factor; young adults, of all races, are less likely to vote than their elders.) Whereas the voting gap between the sexes has closed, and the gap between the races is closing, the class divide has grown wider in recent decades. The most important aspect of class isolated by pollsters and political analysts is education, followed by income and type of occupation. In 1980, 51 percent of those with only a grammar school education voted, whereas 84 percent of those with college degrees did. In its 1983 survey, ABC found that among those who rarely vote, 67 percent think of themselves as working-class, 30 percent as middle-class. Sixty-five percent of these habitual nonvoters are paid by the hour; only 23 percent are salaried, and 10 percent are self-employed.

If low-income and working-class nonvoters suddenly appeared at the polls, would they change American politics? According to careful studies of the question, the answer is no. Pollsters find that the political views of nonvoters—at least on matters that appear on the ballot—are not terribly different from those held by voters. Careful analysis by political scientists suggests that if nonvoters were to vote, they would shift the electorate slightly to the left on economic issues, such as jobs, government spending, public works, and the like, but slightly to the right on social issues, such as busing, abortion, and other life-style questions.

One study tells us that if nonvoters had participated at the same rate as voters in 1980, President Carter would have received only 1.5 percent more of the vote.

Black and Hispanic nonvoters would clearly vote Democratic by hefty margins. But the largest single group of nonvoters—the group that has experienced the most rapid decline in turnout since 1960—is low-income (poor and working-class) whites. Howard Reiter, a political scientist at the University of Connecticut, has analyzed attitudes among white nonvoters in several presidential elections. He found that they favored Nixon in 1960, leaned toward Wallace in 1968, and preferred Carter in 1976. Another survey, conducted by the pollster Robert Teeter, also turned up the Wallace connection. Findings like these suggest that many non-voting, low-income whites are what Kevin Phillips, a political analyst, calls “conservative populists.” They are former Democrats, many of whom fit the label “silent majority,” who have become alienated over the past twenty years. As Phillips argues, the conservative populists are more easily won over by the right than by the left.

What about the third assumption? If more women voted, would they support liberal candidates and defeat the Reaganites? Believing this to be the case, the Democratic Party has launched an effort to register women. But close scrutiny of the data suggests that the most anti-Reagan women are those at the two extremes of the socio-economic spectrum: the poor and uneducated (particularly blacks) and the college-educated (most of whom are white). Most of the latter group already vote, limiting the potential for registration drives to poor and black women. One much larger group, however, also exhibits low turnout rates: white working-class women. By all indications, feeling against Ronald Reagan does not run high within this group. Should voter-registration campaigns bring more of these women than of poor black women to the polls, Reagan might not be hurt.

Finally, will President Reagan be defeated in November if enough nonvoters are registered? Clearly, a substantial number of new anti-Reagan voters will appear, as in 1982. Many of the new voters will be black. But we may also see a substantial new pro-Reagan vote. In 1982, the percentage of eligible voters casting ballots for the party in power increased in an off-year election for the first time since 1950.

A backlash against the attitudes re-

sponsible for the registration drives, particularly among southern whites, is also likely. Jesse Jackson's first swing through North Carolina, a year ago, brought not only a surge in black registration but a surge in white registration as well. “If I could afford to pay Jesse,” says Lamarr Mooneyham, the North Carolina president of the Moral Majority, “I'd bring him down here every month.”

A sober look at the numbers of potential new voters is also instructive. Democratic Party strategists, like Ann Lewis, the political director of the Democratic National Committee, believe that to defeat Reagan they must expand the electorate by 13.5 million people—or 15 percent—and win two thirds of the new votes. History provides some perspective on these numbers. In 1936, when Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal brought millions of new voters to the polls, the turnout soared by 15 percent. Eighty-five percent of all first-time voters chose FDR. Democratic strategists do not hope to duplicate Roosevelt's feat, but they must come close. Yet today's Democratic Party, which was thoroughly repudiated by voters only four years ago, faces a popular incumbent Republican. An anti-Reagan vote in 1984 as substantial as the pro-Roosevelt vote in 1936 seems most unlikely.

Realistically, given performances in the recent past, liberal activists will have done yeoman work if they register even 10 million new voters. If 4 million of those new registrants turn out on Election Day, the registration activists will have beaten the odds. (Without an expensive and labor-intensive get-out-the-vote effort, only one out of four of the newly registered bothers to go to the polls in a typical year.) Of those 4 million new voters, 75 percent might vote Democratic, in which case the Democrats will have gained 3 million votes, the Republicans one million. Meanwhile, conservatives will have been busy registering their own people. The Moral Majority hopes to register from 2 million to 4 million voters (though its leaders would probably be satisfied with one to 2 million), and the Republican Party intends to spend \$8 million to \$10 million on voter registration.

If the right turns out 2 million new voters on Election Day, who go three-to-one for Reagan, they will have cut the Democrats' advantage among new voters to one million. In a close race, decided in key states such as Texas, Illinois, and California, the new voters could tip the

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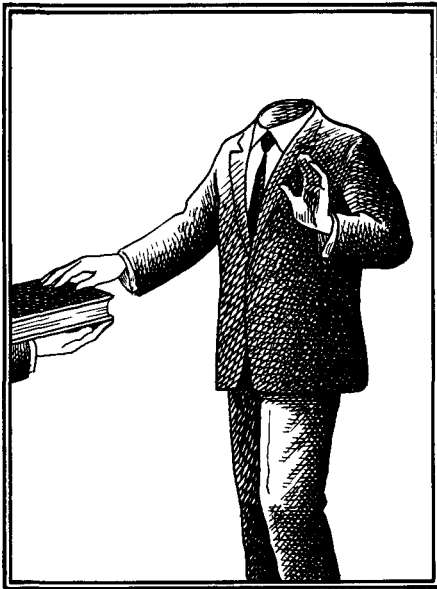
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balance. But if Reagan runs as strong as he appears capable of running, and the economy continues to boom, a million votes will not stop him. The Democrats must do more than register voters; they must inspire them, give them a reason to vote. Registration drives alone may change the outcome of a few state and local races, but they will not elect a Democratic President.

—David Osborne

David Osborne is a free-lance writer with a special interest in political and economic affairs.



LAW

THE EPILEPSY DEFENSE

Despite considerable scientific evidence to the contrary, more and more defendants are claiming that their violent acts were caused by epileptic seizures

ON THANKSGIVING NIGHT, 1976, Patrolman Robert H. Torsney emerged from a Brooklyn housing project after helping five fellow officers peacefully settle a domestic dispute. On the sidewalk leading to his patrol car he encountered a group of teenage boys. One of them, fifteen-year-old Randolph Evans, asked, "Did you just come from apartment 7-D?" Torsney had not, but he said: "You're damn right I did." He then pulled his gun and shot Evans point-blank in the head. Torsney was white, his victim black, and the killing set off

angry protests against what many in the predominantly black neighborhood regarded as the latest example of racist police brutality in the city. The rage subsided somewhat after a grand jury, on the day of the boy's funeral, indicted Torsney for second-degree murder. However, it rekindled a year later, when Torsney came to trial and pleaded that he could not be held legally responsible because he had been suffering a psychomotor epileptic seizure at the time of the shooting.

Like many epileptics who read news accounts of the case, I was disturbed by this defense. Psychomotor seizures, I knew, cause confused behavior. They are characterized by personality alteration and a trancelike state that can last a minute or two or, in rare instances, up to several days. During such periods, the person usually performs, in a kind of dreamy slow motion, simple, automatic actions like smacking of lips, picking at clothing, or merely walking aimlessly. Generally, the epileptic has little or no memory of such seizure, or ictal, events. Aggressive behavior can manifest itself during a psychomotor seizure, but the notion that Torsney managed so calculated a sequence as unholstering, aiming, and firing his weapon while in such a state seemed preposterous to me. Nevertheless, a jury found him not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect, though he had no history of epilepsy and his electroencephalograph (EEG) readings proved normal.

As required by law, the trial court ordered Torsney into the custody of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene. On January 6, 1978, five weeks after the verdict, an examining physician observed that "neither before or after the offense [had Torsney] shown any signs of epilepsy." By mid-1978, a special-release committee of doctors unanimously reported that Torsney did not suffer from a psychosis, a psychopathic disorder, or organic brain damage, and recommended that he be freed, though not to walk a beat again. The Brooklyn district attorney's office fought the department's decision, but after a year-long legal battle Torsney was ordered released by a sharply divided New York State Court of Appeals.

Though dismayed by this chronicle, I regarded it at the time as an isolated instance of a last-ditch defense by a cop in a very tight spot. But in recent months, in the course of researching a novel, I've found that the Torsney verdict has en-

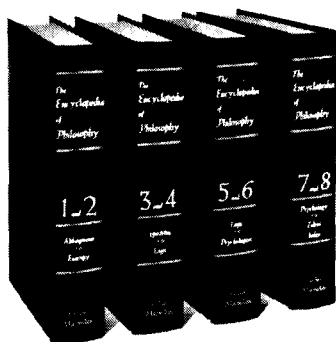
couraged a nationwide increase in cases employing the "epilepsy defense." These cases, too, have generated considerable publicity, giving fresh currency to the myth that epilepsy is linked to insanity and violence. This belief dates back at least to the fifth century and to a killing much like the one committed by Torsney. Herodotus wrote that Cambyses II, King of Persia, deliberately shot an innocent youth in the heart with an arrow while in the throes of "the sacred disease."

The early Greeks and Romans did consider convulsions sacred, positive proof of direct connection with the gods. But throughout most of the centuries that followed, epilepsy served primarily to make its victims outcasts. In the Dark Ages, they were regarded as possessed by demons, and well into the nineteenth century many were still being locked up for life in insane asylums. Though the general public is more enlightened about epilepsy today, the myths die hard. Until 1965, several states prohibited people with epilepsy from marrying, and five still have laws authorizing or mandating involuntary sterilization. Only after 1975 did *Black's Law Dictionary* update its definition of epilepsy, which had read, in part:

The course of the principal disease is generally one of deterioration, the brain being gradually more and more deranged in its functions in the intervals of attack, and the memory and intellectual powers in general becoming enfeebled, leading to a greatly impaired state of mental efficiency, or to dementia, or a condition bordering on imbecility.

THE CONVICTION THAT epilepsy could cause specific criminal behavior gained its widest support in the nineteenth century. Many doctors and lawyers were attracted to the theories of J. Esquirol, a French pioneer in scientific psychiatry, and C. Lombroso, the Italian criminologist who began the scientific study of criminals. Esquirol argued the existence of "masked epilepsy," mental automatisms during which, he believed, a person could commit violent crime. Lombroso said that such people suffered from the "epileptoid criminal condition" and maintained that epileptics were predisposed to brutal behavior. These theories, and others like them, have long been discredited by modern neurological science. For most of the twentieth century, the idea that epilepsy somehow

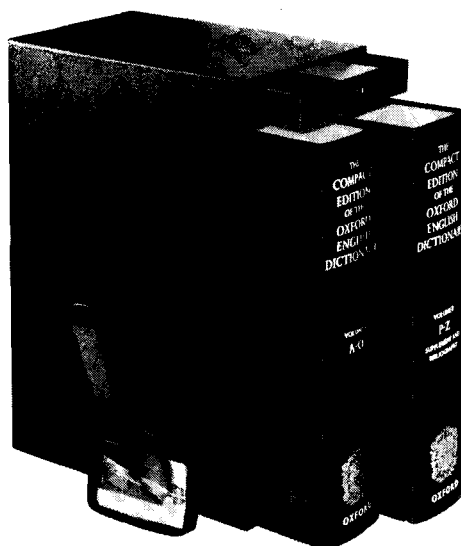
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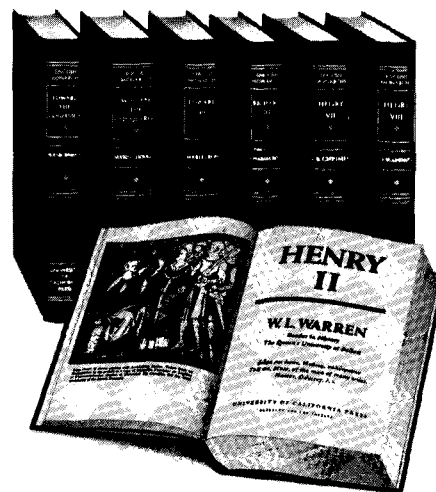
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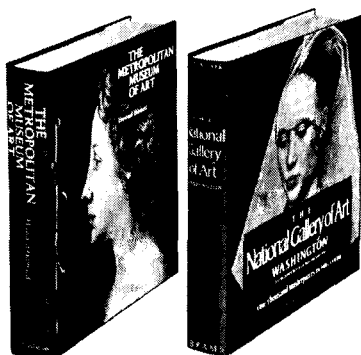
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causes criminal behavior has been, if not dormant, certainly quiescent. Before the Torsney case, it received widespread attention only rarely, as in the defense of Jack Ruby for killing Lee Harvey Oswald, John F. Kennedy's assassin, in 1963.

Since 1977, however, at least twenty homicide or murder cases have come to trial in which lawyers have mounted some version of the epilepsy defense to demonstrate their clients' "insanity" or "diminished legal responsibility." The defense has also been raised on behalf of at least six people charged with crimes of lesser violence. These cases have been tracked by the Epilepsy Foundation of America (EFA) and its local affiliates, which depend primarily on word of mouth and newspaper accounts of the trials. Most likely the total number of cases is higher, since clipping services are not foolproof and no printed transcripts exist of most state criminal trials unless they are appealed. The recent trials, of course, represent only a tiny fraction of all felony cases involving violence, and as such do not constitute a major legal issue. But for the nation's 2 million epileptics and their relatives, the trials and attendant publicity can be harrowing. Many people pleading the epilepsy defense are charged with dramatic killings. They include Wilfredo Rivera, who killed a policeman in a shootout at his Newburgh, New York, home after officers besieged it in response to a call for help; Victoria Bonavita, who stabbed to death her former benefactor and employer in Cliffside, New Jersey, just hours after formally accusing him of stealing her Atlantic City gambling winnings; Thomas Ramseur, who killed a woman in front of her Newark, New Jersey, home by repeatedly stabbing her before five witnesses; John E. Pierce, who tortured and sexually assaulted a University of Mississippi student and then stabbed her fifty-three times and threw her body into the Sunflower River; and Anthony Lee Chaney, who shot a sheriff's deputy three times in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Even crimes that did not result in death often make "good copy" if the epilepsy defense is employed. Fred Young came before a Pinellas County court in Florida accused of holding his girlfriend against her will, breaking dishes over her head, beating her with a broom, and running a hot iron over her body. Clifford Graveline came before a Quebec provincial court accused of clubbing a neighborhood dog with a hammer.

Such cases produce headlines like "Man Cleared Because of His Epilepsy," "Accused Murderer Had Seizure, Mom Says," and "Seizure Gets Him Off Hook." Sometimes the reporting beneath this neon is unemotional and even-handed. Still, the lurid details of the crimes—rehashed day after day before and during the trials—inevitably overwhelm the legal and medical issues. In the end, the verdict may be less important than the coverage. Bonavita, Ramseur, Pierce, and Chaney were all convicted despite their epilepsy defense; Rivera was found not guilty by reason of insanity and, like Torsney, freed after a brief stay in mental hospitals. Young also was found not guilty by reason of insanity, though the judge specifically rejected any link to epilepsy. Graveline, too, was acquitted, and his plea of "non-insane automatism" said to be the first of its kind in Quebec. All seven crimes, however, occasioned reporting that suggested that epileptics are inherently violent. As Dr. Antonio V. Delgado-Escueta puts it, people with epilepsy "have taken an awful beating socially and psychologically because of the recent press."

DR. DELGADO-ESCUETA is the director of the Comprehensive Epilepsy Program at the University of California School of Medicine. In 1980, concerned about the increased use of the epilepsy defense, he organized a workshop of eighteen leading epileptologists from the United States, Canada, West Germany, and Japan. They gathered in Bethesda, Maryland, under the auspices of the EFA and the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke. As reported in the September 17, 1981, issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine*, the workshop "reviewed the manifestations of 33 epileptic attacks in 19 patients; the attacks had been documented by closed-circuit television and electroencephalography, and the patients had been selected for suspected aggressive behavior from [approximately 5,400] patients with seizure disorders recorded in clinics around the world."

Only seven of the nineteen, chosen from such a large population, demonstrated aggressive behavior during seizures. This ranged from shouting and spitting to destructive acts toward chairs, wastebaskets, and beds. Of the seven, three were mentally retarded, three manifested learning problems or organic brain disorders or both, and five had his-

stories of psychiatric problems, including aggressive behavior not associated with seizures. In discussing the seven patients further, the panel concluded:

All aggressive acts appeared suddenly, without evidence of planning, and lasted an average of 29 seconds during [psychomotor] seizures. All patients could be easily restrained. All automatic acts (e.g., kicking and boxing or attempts at grabbing an intended target and scratching his or her face) were short-lived, fragmentary and unsustained.

Our analysis is in agreement with [other research that emphasizes] the extreme rarity of directed aggression during seizures and the near impossibility of committing murder or manslaughter during random and unsustained psychomotor automatisms.

To argue otherwise, says Dr. Delgado-Escueta, is to employ "the fiction writer's imagination."

Michael Crichton did so in *The Terminal Man*, his 1972 thriller about a murderously violent psychomotor epileptic named Harold Benson. Because several neurologists complained about the characterization, Crichton, himself a doctor, was moved to include a postscript in the paperback edition of the novel. "In the face of considerable controversy among clinical neuroscientists," he wrote, "I am persuaded that the understanding of the relationship between organic brain damage and violent behavior is not so clear as I thought at the time I wrote the book. . . . I am concerned that I may have inadvertently hampered the attempts of well-controlled epileptics to function in a society that still retains a lingering prejudice against epilepsy."

The Bethesda panel, beyond seeking to debunk the epilepsy defense, hoped to neutralize a small but vocal group of scientific investigators that continues to insist that criminal violence may, indeed, sometimes be a function of epilepsy. Chief among them is Jonathan H. Pincus, a neurologist at the Yale University School of Medicine, who threw down the gauntlet even before the panel convened. In the March, 1980, issue of *Neurology*, he wrote: "Neurologists, acting as advocates for their patients and not wishing 'to give epileptics a bad name,' have a tendency to discount acts of personal violence as being within the normal range, or to discount the possibility that complex or violent crimes can be ictal events." Pincus argued that most of the studies in this area had not been rigorous



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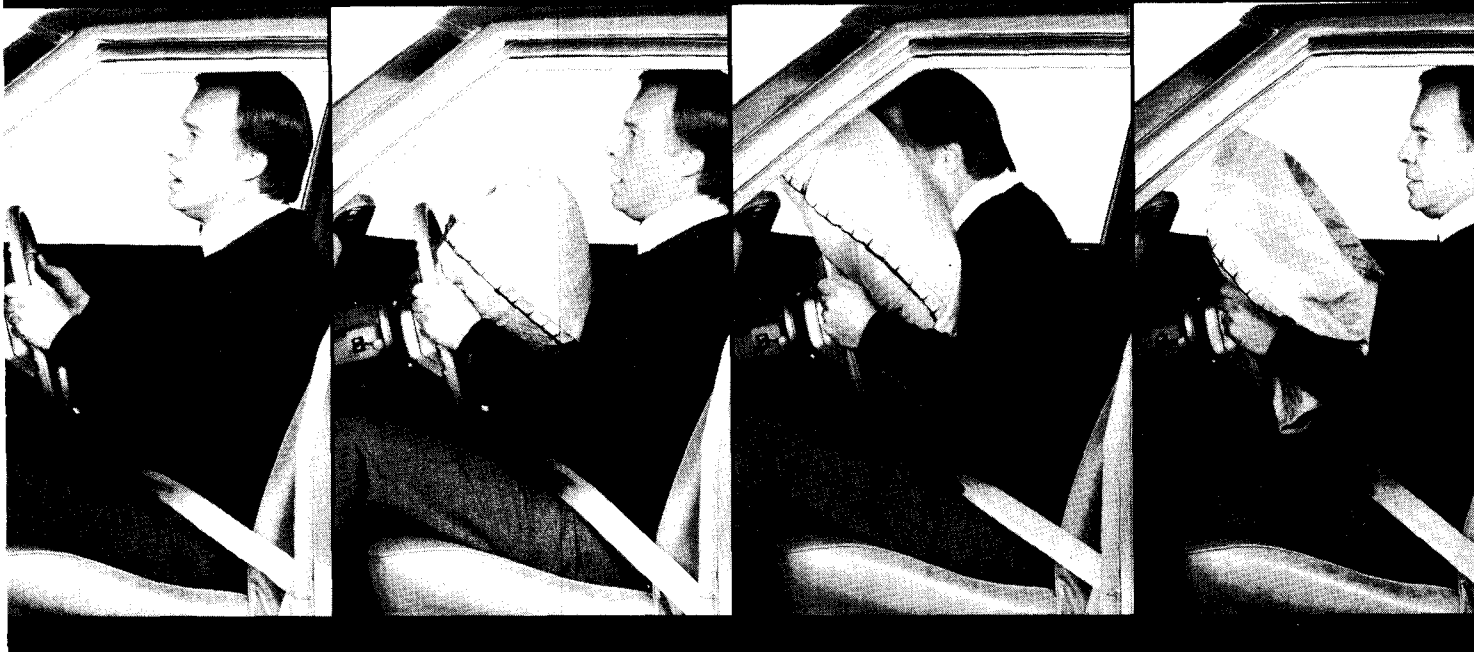
enough. He felt the same way after the panel reported in, maintaining that the "scope of ictal violence and its frequency in the epileptic population may have been seriously underestimated in [the] study."

Pincus's response appeared in the same issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine* as the Bethesda report. He faulted the study's definition of epilepsy as too narrow and implied that the "limited characteristics of ictal violence described by the panel" represented not conclusions but assumptions made prior to the workshop. He questioned the value of closed-circuit television as a technique for measuring epileptic violence, pointing out that if the seizures occur less often than daily, monitoring patients for twenty-four hours (as had been done for the Bethesda study) will not necessarily document the episodes. Pincus also challenged the panel's observation that none of the seven patients carried out his aggression with a lethal weapon, suggesting—somewhat wryly, it seemed—that the availability of such instruments in a hospital "would be limited." In short, he gave no ground.

Now that [the Bethesda] study has amassed convincing clinical evidence that directed violence may be an ictal phenomenon, invoking epilepsy as a defense in certain criminal cases should not overextend the legal concept of diminished responsibility.

Most of the neurological community rejects Pincus's views and endorses the international panel's report. But, whatever their considerable differences, both sides affirm the need for further study, especially of imprisoned violent criminals. Meanwhile, each camp has lined up past research to support its case. Pincus cites a study he conducted with two colleagues which divided ninety-seven incarcerated male juvenile delinquents into two groups, depending on the degree of violence exhibited in their behavior. Seventy-two percent of the more violent group experienced at least two symptoms "suggesting" psychomotor seizures. The Bethesda workshop cites a British study of crimes possibly associated with epileptic automatism. Of seventeen criminals, "only two men were judged as possibly having automatic criminal behavior. . . . in both instances, however, [it] went beyond the fragmentary and unsustained character of automatisms; hence, we also question whether their violent behavior occurred during epileptic seizures."

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THE LAYMAN CAN be pardoned for finding this debate confusing. Most medical discussions of epilepsy tend to be arcane, dealing as they do with the complexities of the brain. Despite modern scientific advances, neurologists themselves still do not know what causes the malady, only that it is triggered by abnormal electrical discharges in the brain cells which can be charted on an EEG machine. Most epileptics lead normal lives, because they take anticonvulsant drugs to control seizures. But researchers don't understand the way in which many of these drugs work—only that they do. Most neurologists regard epilepsy not even as a disease but rather as a spectrum of symptoms that range from the momentary staring of petit mal through psychomotor episodes to the scary grand-mal convulsions that were associated in ancient times with what was called “the falling sickness.” Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that there is no comprehensive legal definition for epilepsy.

An Illinois appeals court grappled in 1977 with this problem in *People v. Grant*, a case in which the defendant claimed he was having a psychomotor seizure when he assaulted a police officer outside a tavern. The court observed:

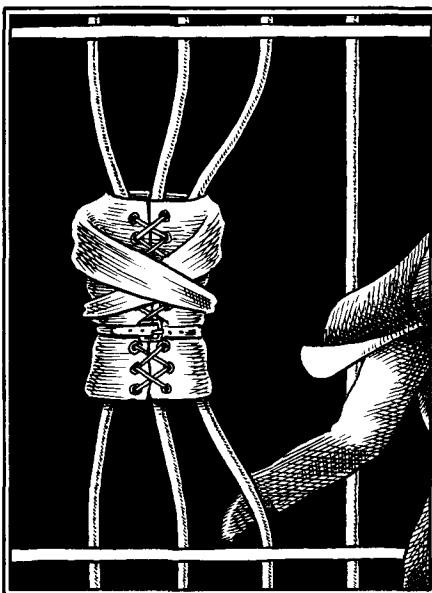
A number of cases from other jurisdictions have addressed the relationship between epilepsy and insanity without clearly distinguishing psychomotor epilepsy manifested by involuntary or automatic behavior from the forms of epilepsy manifested by petit or grand mal convulsive seizures. . . . Indeed, our research has disclosed only a handful of American cases that are clearly similar to the instant case.

According to the EFA, from 1889 to 1980 only fifteen cases in which epilepsy was used as a defense against charges of murder, homicide, manslaughter, or disorderly conduct were appealed in the United States.

In *People v. Grant*, the majority on the court ruled categorically that “automatism is not insanity.” The opinion stressed that automatism can stem from a wide variety of physical conditions other than epilepsy, including drug abuse and hypoglycemia. The dissenting judge, however, wrote that “an epileptic striking another person while in a state of automatism not only lacks the volition to perform a voluntary act but is also insane” within the meaning of the Illinois criminal code. The statutes of most other states allow, even invite, similar dis-

agreement. Jurors are likely to be befogged as well, especially when whipsawed by “expert” witnesses hired by the prosecution and the defense. The courts oversee a sometimes haphazard, occasionally canted adversarial system, not a medical-research system subject to the stringent rules of scientific inquiry.

In the Torsney case, for example, no neurologist testified for the defense. The argument that Torsney suffered from psychomotor epilepsy was made mainly by Dr. Daniel W. Schwartz, a forensic psychiatrist, who had taken the witness stand for one side or the other in more than 300 cases over the previous fifteen years. Dr. Schwartz's testimony was strenuously rebutted by Dr. Herbert Spiegel, a psychiatrist at Columbia-Pres-



byterian Medical Center, in New York City, and a member of the Bethesda panel. He maintained that Torsney “had the capacity to understand . . . the nature and consequences of his act” and at worst suffered from a “neurotic personality disorder . . . and a proneness to hysterical dissociation.” Though Torsney's lawyer, Edward M. Rappaport, had built his case primarily around the epilepsy defense, he was almost cavalier about it in his summation. He told the jury: “Whether you accept the [Spiegel] finding of hysterical dissociation or you accept the concept of psychomotor seizure *is really unimportant*. The fact is there was not normalcy” at the time of the shooting (emphasis added).

Lawrence A. Dubin, who represented Wilfredo Rivera, the defendant acquitted by reason of insanity in the Newburgh shootout, says the Torsney case

“educated me completely on the subject of psychomotor epilepsy.” He, too, did not summon a neurologist to help make his case; instead, he depended largely on the testimony of Dr. Stanley L. Portnow, like Dr. Schwartz a forensic psychiatrist with long experience on witness stands. “Portnow talked in court for a full day,” recalls Dubin. “He brought with him two models of the brain.” (Dr. Portnow was also one of the court-appointed psychiatrists who examined Robert Torsney after his incarceration; he labeled Torsney's condition a “personality disorder” and recommended gradual release.) In the Rivera case, Portnow's task was made all the easier because the prosecution did not call a neurologist to testify, either. Recently, I asked Martin R. Goldberg, who tried the case for the state, why. “Rivera's actions were premeditated and deliberate,” he said. “During the shootout he moved from window to window firing his gun. I simply did not think the jury would buy the psychomotor-epilepsy defense. At the time, I did not think calling a neurologist to testify was necessary.”

TO ENCOURAGE THINKING more in keeping with the medical evidence, the Bethesda report sets forth five criteria for determining whether a violent crime could be associated with an epileptic seizure:

First of all, the diagnosis of epilepsy in such a person should be established by at least one neurologist with special competence in epilepsy. Secondly, the presence of epileptic automatisms should be documented by the history and by closed-circuit television and electroencephalographic biotelemetry. Thirdly, the presence of aggression during epileptic automatisms should be verified in a videotape-recorded seizure in which ictal epileptiform patterns are also recorded on the electroencephalogram. Fourthly, the aggressive or violent act should be characteristic of the patient's habitual seizures, as elicited in the history. Finally, a clinical judgment should be made by the neurologist, attesting to the possibility that the act (the alleged crime) was part of a seizure.

These recommendations, and the Bethesda report in general, are now promulgated by the EFA and other epilepsy organizations around the country.

The results cannot be measured precisely, but the guidelines seem to be having an impact. Last year, for example, an

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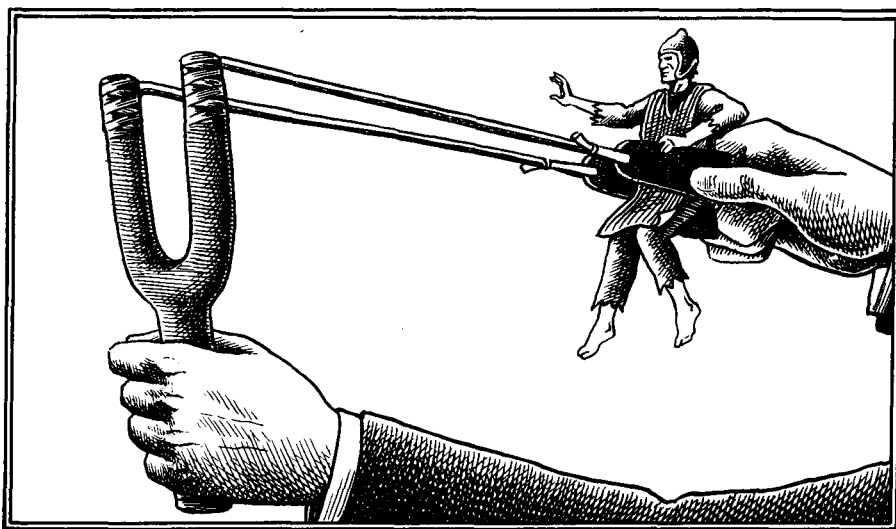
Arizona neurologist noticed that Anthony Lee Chaney was using the epilepsy defense against the charges that he shot the sheriff's deputy in Flagstaff. He got in touch with John Verkamp, the county attorney, and told him about the Bethesda report. Subsequently, Verkamp arranged through the Epilepsy Institute, in New York, to have Dr. Eli S. Goldensohn come to Flagstaff. Dr. Goldensohn, the chairman of the EFA and a Bethesda panelist, testified that Chaney's EEG readings were normal and explained that, according to the panel's findings, if Chaney *had* been in a psychomotor seizure he could not have performed the several deliberate and premeditated acts that immediately preceded the killing: slamming on the brakes of his car, pulling out a rifle, getting out of the vehicle, advancing on the deputy's car, and firing a total of thirty shots, including the three that killed the deputy. It is altogether

possible, of course, that Lee Chaney would have been convicted without the testimony from Dr. Goldensohn, but in Verkamp's view it helped the prosecution immensely.

Few neurologists rule out the possibility that in extremely rare instances epilepsy *might* play some role in violent criminal behavior. As yet, however, no scientific proof supports the contention that epileptics can commit goal-directed, aggressive crimes during seizures. On the contrary, almost all of the recent cases suggest, as the Torsney trial did, that it is the defense lawyers who are goal-directed and aggressive—scrambling for a dramatic plea to save a defendant in what is a near-hopeless situation.

—Richard Pollak

Richard Pollak is completing a novel that deals with epilepsy.



PERU CORNER OF THE DEAD

In the Andes, peasants are caught between two essentially foreign powers: guerrillas and government troops

ONE MORNING LATE in 1980, a few months after elections had ended twelve years of military dictatorship in Peru, dead dogs were found hanging from lampposts along Avenida Nicolas de Pierola, the principal boulevard of Lima. Placards denouncing the "fascist dog" Deng Xiaoping and praising the Gang of Four had been tacked up as well. Al-

though this gruesome spectacle provoked anxious speculation—few people had ever heard of Sendero Luminoso, or "Shining Path," the obscure Maoist party responsible—within weeks it was forgotten amid the bustle of the country's return to open politics.

When hanging dogs and placards appeared a short time later in the remote Andean department of Ayacucho, 250 miles southeast of Lima, some illiterate peasants, not recognizing Spanish, argued about what language the signs were written in. But, in contrast to most people in Lima, the peasants in Ayacucho could guess what the animals signified. According to a popular legend dating back to the Incas, which Indians in the region who have never heard of Mao can easily recite, the dog is a companion who

follows, or leads, his master to the grave. And so the peasants figured—as it turned out, correctly—that wherever a hanging dog appeared, someone was going to die, or be put to death.

Dogs are no longer strung up in the streets of Peru, but the violence they foretold has escalated. Random bombings and seemingly senseless massacres have made Sendero Luminoso a household name throughout Peru. Yet it remains probably the most enigmatic guerrilla movement in this hemisphere. Fiercely doctrinal and often ruthless, the group issues little propaganda. It does not seek international allies, and there is no evidence that it has any.

In 1980, no one would have predicted the rise of a group like Sendero Luminoso. The long-awaited elections resulted in the return to the presidency of Fernando Belaúnde Terry, the idealistic veteran of the Peruvian center whose first term as president had been cut short in 1968 by a military coup. Belaúnde's reelection (from a field of fifteen candidates) was cathartic for Peru. It brought the revival of a free press and of an active political opposition. Cabinet members whom Belaúnde had lured away from international banks and from academic posts in the United States announced a host of long-range billion-dollar development projects intended to reverse the economic disintegration that had attended the final years of military rule. Not least, Belaúnde's re-election stimulated a resurgence of national pride: Peru had become a democracy in a continent controlled largely by generals.

The early noises of Sendero Luminoso were barely audible. During the first two years of the new administration, there were sporadic raids on government outposts in the Andes and assassinations of provincial schoolteachers and landowners, but the attacks were confined to 5 percent of the national territory, and the government described them as the work of "common delinquents," who could be dealt with by the police. How much force the guerrillas could muster did not become clear until March 2, 1982. That night, approximately 150 "delinquents" blacked out Ayacucho City, the capital of the department. Firing automatic weapons stolen from the police and using Inca slings (called *huaracas*) to hurl dynamite, they overran the city's maximum-security prison. There, they sang revolutionary hymns, raised a red flag, and freed all 247 prisoners, a number of whom were suspected of being terrorists.

In response, the government airlifted in a special wing of the national police, known as the *sinchis*, that had been conceived by U.S. advisers in 1965. *Sinchi* is a word in the Indian language Quechua that means, roughly, "brave warrior." Patrols were deployed throughout the department. Ill-trained, inexperienced, and completely out of their element in the high sierra, the *sinchis* were suspicious of the Indians, whose language they didn't speak and whose customs they didn't understand. Heavily armed and frequently drunk, *sinchis* patrolling the streets after the 9 P.M. curfew terrorized the residents of Ayacucho City. Their efforts at counterinsurgency were a disaster. Government intelligence reports failed to note that Sendero Luminoso had won strong support in the countryside by holding regular meetings, at which the guerrillas led indoctrination sessions, distributed food, and from time to time executed "enemies of the people": alleged child molesters, petty criminals, elected officials, and wealthy merchants. Many peasants regarded these activities as public services—the first they had ever received.

Within months after the prison raid, red pins for the guerrillas replaced blue pins for the government on the strategic maps in the regional command center, as the police abandoned their outposts. The routed *sinchis*, followed by civil and religious authorities, fled to Ayacucho City. In the newly established "liberated zones," Sendero Luminoso set about reworking Peruvian society.

AYACUCHO IS A Quechua word that means "corner of the dead." The department curves up the spine of the central Andes, sloping off from desolate ice caps and dry, barren plateaus toward a high jungle in the northeast. It belongs to the vast part of Peru that upper-class residents of Lima associate with backwardness, poverty, and romantic folkways and refer to as *las provincias*. The term is as much an explanation as a description. Ayacucho is more foreign to many Peruvian leaders than southern Florida. Yet, although the department is distant from what the historian Jorge Basadre, who died in 1980, called "the official Peru," it has a secure place in the country's heritage. The sleepy, picturesque capital, which has thirty-three colonial churches for its 80,000 inhabitants, is renowned throughout South America for its spectacular Holy Week festival. And just outside the city lies the plain of

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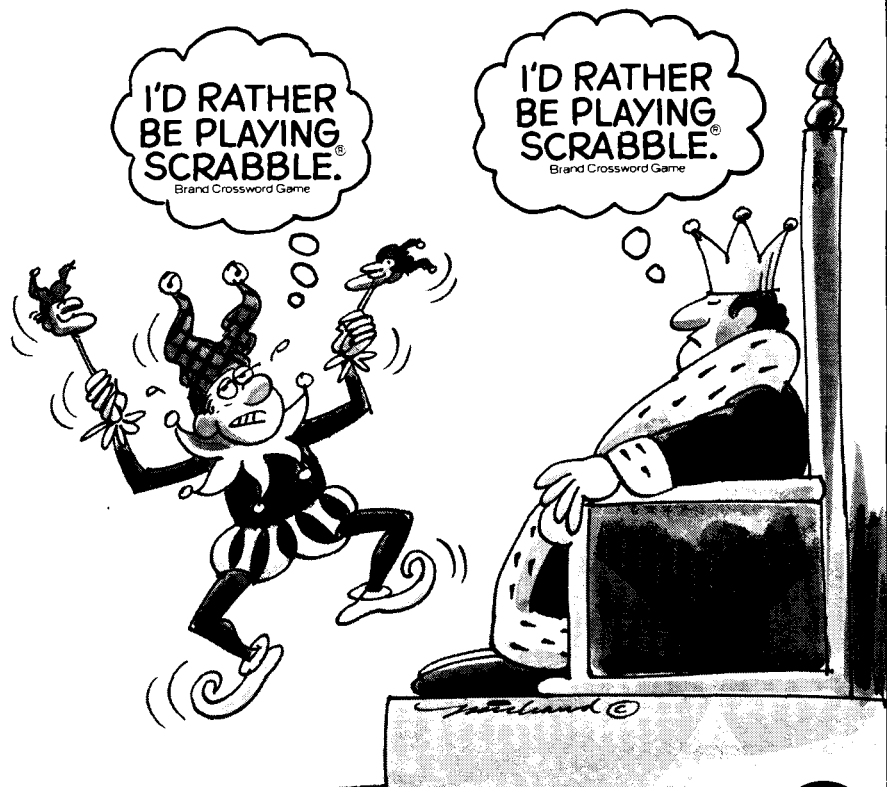
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Quinua, where, in 1824, Simón Bolívar's liberation army defeated Spanish forces in the last colonial battle for independence in the Americas.

Without industry or steady public works, and plagued by terrible soil, Ayacucho is one of the poorest and most neglected areas of Peru. Approximately half a million people live there, most of them peasants whose small highland communities are hours from the nearest roads and don't appear on maps. Quechua is the first language for most residents; illiteracy in Spanish approaches 70 percent. The names of towns like Ccacahuasi, Sejcha, and Uchuypallca take a variety of spellings. According to the World Bank, life expectancy hovers at around forty-five years, well below the national average and just below that of Bangladesh. Running water, electricity, and medical services are virtually nonexistent outside of Ayacucho City and the principal market towns.

Having been left to themselves, the people of Ayacucho are fiercely independent. For centuries, they have resisted the interventions of any central government—Inca, Spanish, or Peruvian. The distrust that members of the upper class in Lima feel for peasants is matched in Uchuypallca by prejudice against city folk.

Ayacucho was an ideal laboratory for young, ambitious students and professors at the University of Huamanga, in Ayacucho City. Among them was Abimael Guzmán, a philosophy professor whose doctoral dissertation, "The Theory of Space in Kant," had been well received. Guzmán's colleagues describe him as having been quiet and serious. He married into a middle-class Ayacucho family and made his home a salon for his growing student following. Eventually, his interest turned from Kant to revolutionary theory, and as the group sifted through an eclectic course on that subject, it developed an obsessive dedication to Mao. The students saw in the China of the 1930s an analogy to what they called the "feudal" world of the Peruvian peasantry. They were helped to this view by the ideas of a Peruvian Marxist, José Carlos Mariátegui. In his book *Seven Essays for the Interpretation of Peruvian Reality*, published in 1928, Mariátegui argued that the indigenous society of Peru, like that of China, was the key to the prison of the country's repressive heritage. In 1970, Guzmán and his disciples denounced the Peruvian Communist Party and founded the Commu-

nist Party for the Shining Path of Mariátegui.

Sendero Luminoso missionaries fanned out into the Ayacucho countryside to learn Quechua and highland customs and to preach the good news of agrarian communism. They installed themselves as grade school teachers, agricultural advisers, and peasant organizers. But after some open political canvassing during the 1970s, Sendero Luminoso began to advocate changes more radical than those that could be obtained through the government—even if the military dictatorship were to end. "Everyone even vaguely left of center was throwing around terms like 'armed struggle' in those days," says Dr. Luis Millones, a professor of anthropology at the University of San Marcos, in Lima, and a former colleague of Guzmán's. "Abimael was unusual only in the sense that he truly believed what he said."

In 1978, Guzmán disappeared. It is not known whether he is still in Peru or even whether he is alive. (He had suffered from a potentially fatal skin disease.)

To the 400 or so alleged guerrillas who are imprisoned on El Fronton Island, off the coast near Lima, Guzmán has been transfigured into the legendary "Comrade Gonzalo," the "Fourth Sword of Marxism" (alongside Marx, Lenin, and Mao) and the spiritual leader of what Sendero Luminoso calls its "long march to power."

It seems from the comments of arrested guerrillas that "the thought of Comrade Gonzalo" condemns communism in all its present forms. The group is probably the only revolutionary party to have thrown bombs at both the American and Chinese embassies. It scorns Peru's legitimate Marxist parties, calling their leaders "parliamentary cretins." The group takes its ideology chiefly from the Chinese Cultural Revolution and also from the Pol Pot regime, in Cambodia. Sendero Luminoso is not interested in traditional schemes of economic development. "One gets the feeling that their attitude goes deeper than a revulsion toward capitalism," Jaime Urrutia, a popular anthropology professor at the university in Ayacucho, says. "It's the tractor they can't stand."

BY THE END of 1982, Sendero Luminoso had laid claim to most of Ayacucho. Belaúnde was struggling with a score of other disasters. The erratic behavior of the cyclical El Niño current, in

the Pacific Ocean, was causing heavy rains unprecedented in northern Peru, ruining the season's crops and flooding tens of thousands of homes. Near Lake Titicaca, in southern Peru, the worst drought in a generation was beginning. Lima was suffering shortages of fresh water. Nationwide, tourism was way down. (As of last November, it had dropped by nearly 50 percent, owing in part to an advisory issued by the U.S. State Department in May of 1982, which cautioned tourists about the dangers of Peruvian guerrilla activity. That advisory is still in effect.) The economy was heading down a long slide, with government austerity measures holding wage increases far below an annual inflation rate of 80 percent. (It has since risen to more than 130 percent.) Hundreds of unpaid miners and their families were arriving in Lima from the mountains on foot and settling in squalid camps within view of government offices. There they clashed with the police during demonstrations held to protest Belaúnde's lack of support for their debt-ridden industry.

The President wanted to avoid adding the armed forces to his problems. During his first, ill-fated term, the military had brutally crushed a much less dangerous band of guerrillas, and had gathered enough momentum to march him from the presidential palace in his pajamas and put him on a plane out of Peru. But when Sendero Luminoso executed twenty-one civilians and government officials in Ayacucho in December of 1982 alone, public disgust and near-mutiny in the cabinet forced Belaúnde to resort to what he described as "methods we do not wish to adopt." He authorized a battalion of the Second Infantry Division to take control of operations in the department; in effect, he declared martial law. About 5,000 soldiers are now stationed in Ayacucho.

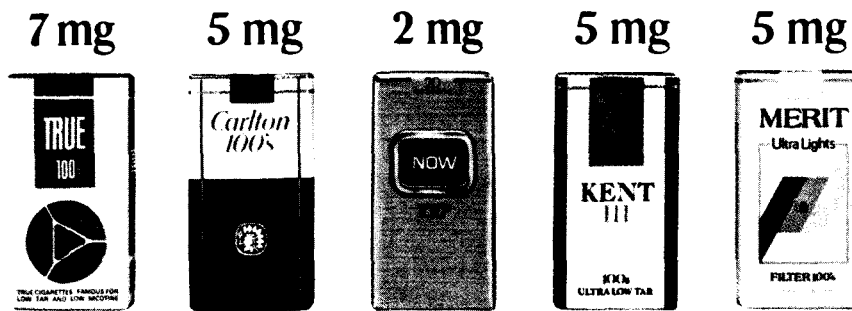
The military claims to have had remarkable success against the guerrillas so far. Reportedly, only seventeen soldiers have been killed since the beginning of 1983. And whereas the *sinchis* reported having killed forty-eight guerrillas from 1980 to 1982, terse messages issued by the political-military command in the Ayacucho barracks indicate that during the first five months of 1983 (the most recent period for which figures are available), the soldiers killed more than 1,000. Moreover, government sources say that the army was ordered to understate figures in order to avoid "a publicity problem," and that the actual number of

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deaths during those five months may have been far greater. "It's at least double," the *sinchis'* commanding intelligence officer in Ayacucho told me recently.

According to rough intelligence estimates, only 1,000 guerrillas were active in the department at the time. Peasants and soldiers have told me that the majority of casualties have been unarmed "sympathizers." Checking these reports has been difficult, however, because a military decree restricting the press to Ayacucho City makes travel in the countryside dangerous. The army's official figures are also hard to check, because the army does not identify the dead. "We are not a coroner's office," Brigadier General Clemente Noel told reporters in a rare interview last June. Since then, the army has all but stopped releasing numbers.

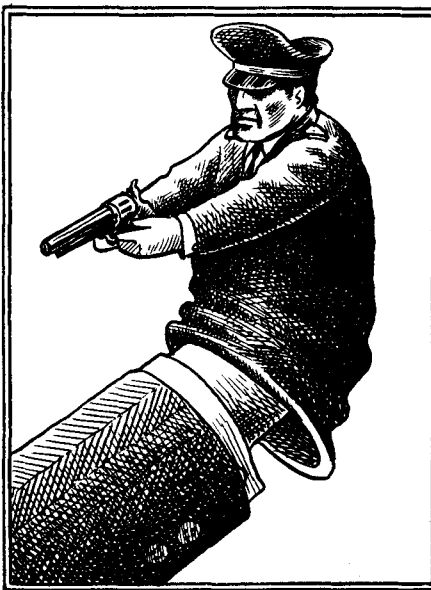
The intervention of the armed forces in Ayacucho has coincided with an explosion of violence across the south-central Andes. Key bridges have been burned and commercial crops destroyed, as part of the guerrillas' strategy of dividing the countryside from the cities. The guerrillas are also said to be stealing food and pressing young men and women into service.

All these actions impose economic hardships on peasants who are already strapped. Sendero Luminoso has shown itself to be unflinching about killing recalcitrant peasants, and it has taken advantage of long-standing local disputes to stir up rivalries between communities. In April, 1983, in the first of many peasant raids led by armed guerrillas, at least seventy-seven men, women, and children in the town of Lucanamarca were massacred. Such incidents have caused some highland communities, which tend to be doggedly independent, and which are caught between two essentially foreign powers, to side with the authority they call "Señor Government." With encouragement from the armed forces, peasants have surprised guerrillas (or perhaps only their "sympathizers") and killed them with axes and slings.

In January of last year, eight Peruvian journalists traveling on foot to investigate the military's reports of one such ambush were hacked to death by Andean Indians. Although negatives recovered from a reporter's camera show the journalists talking with highlanders near the hamlet of Uchuraccay, it seems that the Indians mistook the journalists for a Sendero Luminoso column. When the mili-

tary went to Uchuraccay to investigate intelligence reports of the attack, it took a television crew along, and the exhumation of the bodies was carried live by stations throughout Peru.

The killings became a national scandal. More than 100,000 people marched in the journalists' funeral procession through downtown Lima. Many of them shouted anti-government slogans; newspapers and opposition political parties accused the military of complicity in the deaths. To head off a violent debate about the government's operations in Ayacucho, Belaúnde appointed one of the government's most influential supporters, the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, to chair an independent investigative commission.



The commission's report, which Vargas Llosa himself wrote, absolved the government of direct responsibility for the murders. It attributed the deaths to profound divisions in Peruvian society, for which it held "the vast majority of Peruvian citizens" responsible. The report asked: "Does official Peru have the right to expect these men [the highlanders], who, through indifference and negligence, have been maintained in primitive conditions and apathy, to act like Peruvians who, whether rich or poor, from the mountains or the coast, the city or the countryside, participate in modern life and are ruled by laws, rituals, and customs [the highlanders] have never heard of and would probably have a difficult time understanding if they did?" The killers, it said, were "citizens of a society in which, on a daily basis, violence assumes the most elementary manifesta-

tions and in which, because of the scarcity of resources, defense of one's belongings, when they are considered threatened, often produces extremely violent reactions."

SENDERO LUMINOSO DOES NOT appear to have the arms, the membership, or the popular appeal necessary to threaten the government directly. Yet the group is not likely to disappear. According to Luis Percovich, Peru's minister of the interior, only one of the six men and five women whom the government believes to be the movement's leaders is among the more than 3,000 suspects who have been reported captured or killed. The guerrillas maintain a firm foothold in Ayacucho, and they are also showing up in other Andean departments. Most important, they have intensified their activity in Lima, and have had some success in recruiting teenagers from the *pueblos jóvenes*—the shantytowns where 2 million of the city's 5 million inhabitants live.

The police have warned four of the country's largest companies, all of them American (IBM, Goodyear, Occidental Petroleum, and Southern Peru Copper Corporation), that they are likely Sendero Luminoso targets. In July of 1983, after blacking out the capital for the fourth time in little more than a year, guerrillas bombed factories and staged a daring, cold-blooded raid on Belaúnde's Popular Action Party headquarters, in which they killed two party workers and wounded dozens of others. Following the attack, Belaúnde, for the first time in the three years of his current presidency, imposed a nationwide state of emergency, suspending constitutional guarantees for sixty days.

Guzmán's former colleague Luis Milones (who was a member of the Vargas Llosa commission) says that "every guerrilla action in Lima is more dangerous [to the government] than a thousand deaths in the sierra." Indeed, while reports of violence in Ayacucho customarily draw only scattered protests, blackouts and bombings in Lima set off wild speculations about whether order will be restored by a military coup. The attacks have led Belaúnde to adopt a tougher image, calling for the death penalty for guerrillas and hurling widely publicized, and so far unproven, accusations linking Sendero Luminoso to leftist priests, international foundations, drug traffickers, and foreign agents. Recently, when Attorney General Miguel Cavero suggest-

ed that a "dialogue" be established with the guerrillas, the idea was called traitorous by Popular Action leaders in Congress.

The administration has taken pains to keep the military content. Belaúnde provoked unofficial objections from some of Peru's international creditors early last year when he authorized a mammoth schedule of defense projects whose total cost is estimated to be \$3 billion, and which includes an \$870 million deal with the French for two dozen Mirage jet fighters. The government's deference to the country's military planners has been repaid with pledges of allegiance to democracy by the commanders of the armed forces.

A coup seems unlikely in the near future, if for no better reason than that the military is still reeling from the tumultuous decade it spent in power. "Nobody wants to run Peru today, least of all us," one high-ranking general in the Ministry of War told me last summer. But some Peruvians fear that, even under a civilian government, a stalemate with Sendero Luminoso will result in what they call the "Argentinization" of the government. They are referring to the anti-terrorist repression in Argentina during the 1970s, when thousands of people disappeared. In Peru, the apparatus for wide-scale repression is a permanent fixture. After the state of emergency last summer, security forces estimated that they had rounded up 33,000 suspects in Lima alone (almost all of whom were swiftly questioned and released). Police crack-downs on moderate leftists have become increasingly common. In Ayacucho, they are habitual. For example, last May, Jaime Urrutia, of the University of Huamanga, was beaten by the army and held for two weeks without charges. According to one resident of Lima, "Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay—even Chile, believe it or not—are beginning to face the possibility of a freer society. Peru is in danger of slipping back from one."

That may be just what Sendero Luminoso wants. "It's one of the great ironies of all this," Urrutia says. "If the government becomes more repressive, or if the coup comes, there's only one clandestine organization in Peru prepared to oppose it."

—Philip Bennett

Philip Bennett, a reporter for and later the editor of The Lima Times during his two-year residence in Peru, recently returned to the United States.

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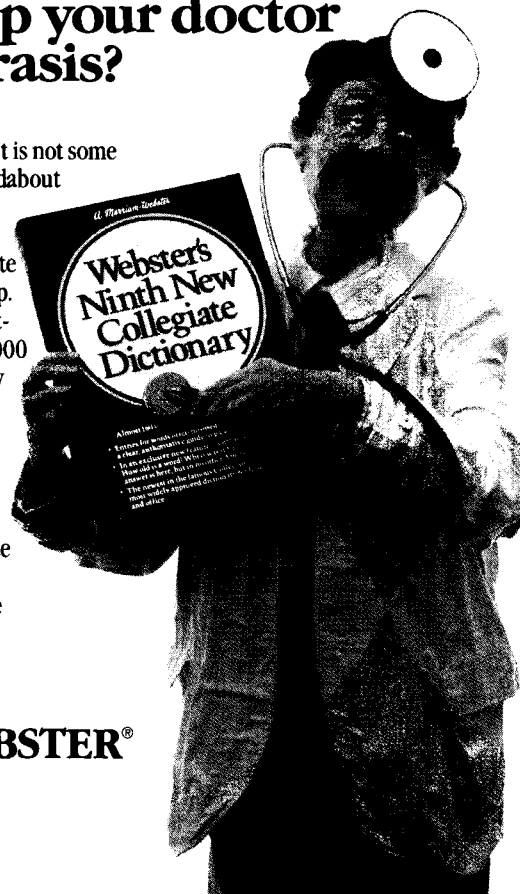
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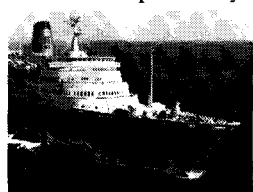
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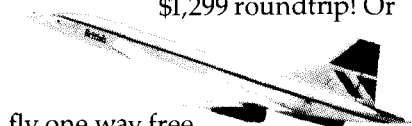


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IF YOU CAN READ THIS, YOU'RE TOO CLOSE

BY ROY BLOUNT, JR.

WHAT DO WE speak of when we speak of "literature"? Before beginning to "answer" that question, we must ask another question: "What do we speak of when we speak of 'What'?" This is itself a peculiarly *written* question, since it cannot be asked in conversation without leading to this sort of thing:

"What?"

"What."

"What?"

"What."

"What did you say?"

"Are you saying 'What,' did you say?" or "What did you say?"

"No! I'm asking what you said."

At this point we would be forced to clarify our remarks by wiggling our fingers—now two on each hand, to signify "quote" marks, now just one on each hand, to signify so-called "single-quote" marks, or, as the British call them, "inverted commas." Imagine how difficult it would be to express the statement "'inverted commas'" (that is to say, the phrase "inverted commas" surrounded by . . .) by wiggling our fingers. Especially if the conversation were literally (so to speak) Anglo-American—that is, between an Anglo on the one hand (so to speak), and an American on the other. The British, of course, use (') to mean (").

It was the great advance of Hercule Demincement, in his pioneer work *Quoi qua 'Quoi'*, to show that even to say "Wh . . ." ("Qu . . .") is to assume too much.² Since then we have tended to speak of "'What,'" for argument's sake, as "'Quoi,'" and of the work of Demincement and his followers as Quoisism.³

In *Quoi qua 'Quoi'* (whose publication caused a cobblestone to be hurled at the Sorbonne, cracking a *philosophe*) appear the first of Demincement's now classic imaginary dialogues involving Dominique You, Jean Lafitte's "right-hand man." Down in "torrid Barataria," where the "Father of Waters laves the Delta and the Gulf," Lafitte's "privateers" were "a

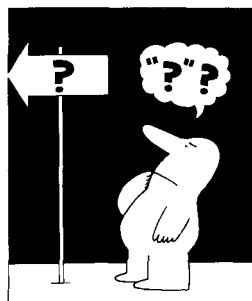
law unto themselves," but in the "Battle of New Orleans," "rallying behind" "Andy" Jackson, they "fit the bloody British" with grand "*esprit de corps*" at a "cotton-bale barricade":

*Behind it stood our little force—
None wished it to be greater;
For every man was half a horse
And half an alligator.⁴*

At one time Dominique You was known to every schoolboy reader of swashbuckling tales. And yet, Demincement points out, the doughty little cannoneer must have caused consternation

in the bayous when he was asked "Who're you?" and he answered "I'm You."

But maybe You spoke only French. Then he may have said, "*Je suis You.*" "You are *fou*," a speaker of both languages, who assumed that You, too, was bilingual, may have replied. In print You might have cleared up the matter



by writing (we're speaking of French print now), "Pas 'you,' 'You.'"⁵ But You appears—in engravings of the period⁶—to have been illiterate.

Demincement also raises the question of "*pain*." In Anglo-American print, it is unclear whether "*pain*" (or "*'pain'*") is being italicized for emphasis or to show that it is French. For instance:

"My wife makes great *pain*."

"Great *pain*?"

"Yep."

"Great *pain*? How do you mean she makes great *pain*?"

"Not *pain*. *Pain*. Homemade *pain*."

Let's return to Dominique You. Say he is at a get-together with some strictly English speakers.

"Who're you?" one of the English-speakers asks You.

"You," You replies. (He *understands* some English, just doesn't speak it.)

"You? What do you mean you're me?"

"*Pas vous*," says You, "You."

"Well, pah-voo you, too," says the English-speaker.

"*Non, non, non*," says You, going for his cutlass.

ILLUSTRATION BY CHARLES BARSOTTI

MAY 1984

The English-speaker—not knowing whom he is dealing with—bristles. “See here!” he cries. “First you say you’re me, then you say a lot of gibberish, then . . . I say! Who are you to take offense when I say the same thing you said to *me* back to . . . *you*?”

“*Oui! Oui!*” says You, thinking the English-speaker has at last realized who he is.

“*Wel?*” exclaims the English-speaker, unable to imagine what this small, nasty Frog can think the two of them have in common.

There lies the crux of Quoist theory. Beyond that, there is scant agreement even as to how “Quoist” is pronounced. Some feel it rhymes with “hoist.” Another pronunciation may be inferred from a recent sardonic reference to Demincement as “Jesus Quoist.”⁷

“*What do we speak of when we speak of ‘literature’?*” indeed.

And what if we should work our way all the way through “What”? We would still have “do” and “we” and “speak” and “of” and “when” and a *second*, distinct, “we” and “speak” and “of” to clear up before we got to “*literature*.” Furthermore, in a startling paper entitled “*Q . . . /Cue/Queue*,”⁸ a brash young Johns Hopkins Englistician named John Hopkin may well have gone beyond Demincement himself.

Experts consider it unlikely that literature, “itself,” will ever catch up. Indeed, a consensus is growing, among the toughest-minded of a new generation of Quoists, that literature—not to mention, as Demincement has put it, “‘*literature*,’ (quote[single quote (quote-unquote)unsingle quote]unquote)”⁹—is an illusion.

1. You know what I mean.

2. Demincement’s title is drolly resistant to citation, even by a Frenchman, because even in France, “*qua*,” *qua* Latin, should be set in roman (not to be confused with *roman*) within a title reference, since it is italicized *outside* title references. But if you don’t italicize the middle word of a three-word title that is hardly conventionally titular-looking to begin with, then what—as Demincement might put it—do you have?

3. Originally “Quoism,” but one *i* (some say the left, some the right) was, as Demincement’s colleague Achille Täupinière once put it lightly, “soon winked.”

4. According to a popular song of the period.

5. Or, more precisely, «Pas *you*», «You».

6. One of the problems rigorous Quoism runs into, incidentally, is the impossibility, to date, of italicizing a period.

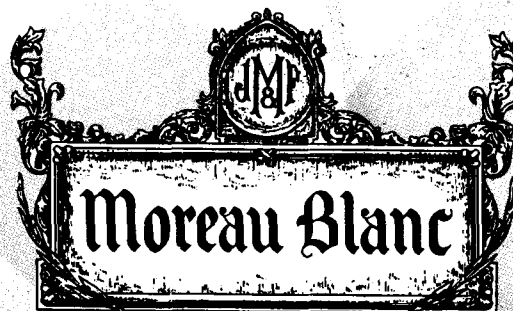
7. In Caesura Tax’s redeconstructive prose sequence, *Tales Untold II*.

8. Delivered by mistake but to great applause before the International Polymer-Polypeptide Congress last year in Kew.

9. My translation, his italics.

El vino de la casa
Le vin de maison
Il vino da tavola
The house wine
Der Hauswein
Husets vin

יין הבית
家用酒



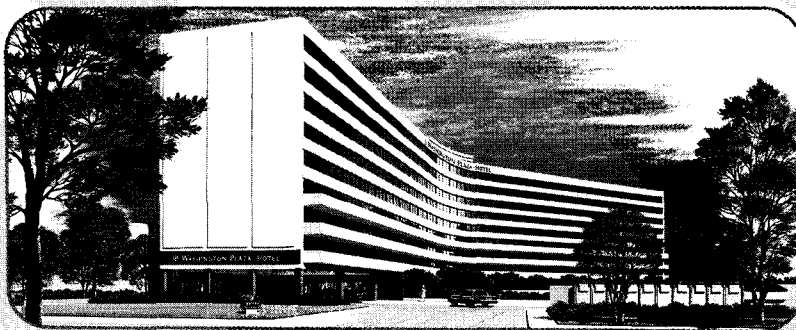
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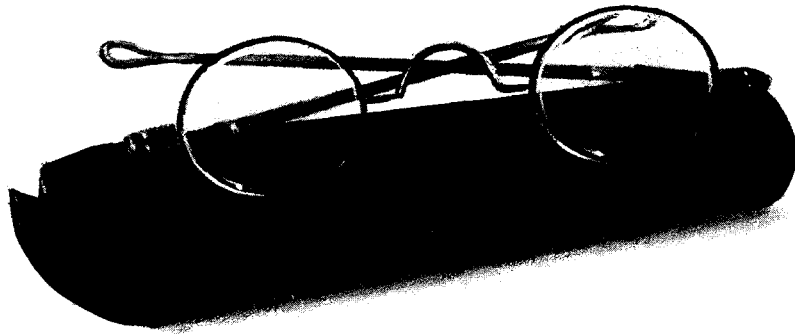


Thunderbird
Have you driven a Ford...
lately?



LINCOLN

BY GORE VIDAL



ELIHU B. WASHBURNE OPENED HIS GOLD WATCH. THE spidery hands showed five minutes to six.

"Wait here," he said to the driver, who said, "How do I know you're coming back, sir?"

At the best of times Congressman Washburne's temper was a most unstable affair, and his sudden outbursts of rage—he could roar like a preacher anticipating hell—were much admired in his adopted state of Illinois, where constituents proudly claimed that he was the only militant teetotaler who behaved exactly like a normal person at five minutes to six, say, in the early morning of an icy winter day—of the twenty-third of February, 1861, to be exact.

"Why, you black—!" As the cry in Washburne's throat began to go to its terrible maximum, caution, the politician's ever-present angel, cut short the statesman's breath. A puff of unresonated cold steam filled the space between the Congressman and the Negro driver on his high seat.

Heart beating rapidly with unslaked fury, Washburne gave the driver some coins. "You are to stay here until I return, you hear me?"

"I hear you, sir." White teeth were quickly bared and unbared in the black, cold-puckered face.

Washburne buttoned up his overcoat and stepped carefully onto the frozen mud that was supposed to be the pavement of a stately avenue leading to the squalid red-brick train depot of Washington City, capital of thirty-four United States that were now in the process of disuniting. He fluffed up his beard, hoping to better warm his face.

Washburne entered the depot as the cars from Baltimore were rattling to a halt. Negro porters were slouched along the sidings. Huge carts stood ready to be filled with Northern merchandise to be exchanged for Southern tobacco,

raw cotton, food. Currently, the Southerners were saying that Washington City was the natural capital of the South. But they did not say it, if they were wise, in Washburne's irritable Western presence.

Just past the locomotive, the representative of Illinois's First District stationed himself in front of an empty gilded wagon whose sides were emblazoned with the name of Gautier, the town's leading caterer, a Frenchman who was, some claimed but never he, the lost Dauphin of France.

As Washburne watched the sleepy travelers disembark, he wished that he had brought with him at least a half-dozen federal guards. Since the guards were just coming off night duty, no one would think it odd if they should converge, in a casual sort of way, upon the depot. But the other half of the semi-official Joint Congressional Committee of Two, Senator William H. Seward, of New York, had said, "No, we don't want to draw *any* attention to our visitor. You and I will be enough." Since the always mysterious Seward had then chosen not to come to the depot, only the House of Representatives was represented, in the stout person of Elihu B. Washburne, who was, suddenly, attracted to a plainly criminal threesome. To the left, a small, sharp-eyed man with one hand plunged deep in his overcoat pocket, where the outline of a derringier was visible. To the right, a large, thickset young man with both hands in his pockets—two pistols? In the center, a tall, thin man, wearing a soft slouch hat pulled over his eyes like a burglar, and a short overcoat whose collar was turned up, so that nothing was visible between cap and collar but a prominent nose and high cheekbones covered with yellow skin, taut as a drum. In his left hand he clutched a leather gripsack containing, no doubt, the tools of his sinister trade.

As the three men came abreast of Washburne, the congressman said, "Well, you can't fool me, Abe."

The small man turned fiercely on Washburne, hand half

This account is drawn from Lincoln, Gore Vidal's new novel, to be published next month by Random House.

out of his overcoat pocket, revealing the derringer's barrel. But the tall man said, "It's all right, Mr. Pinkerton. This is Congressman Washburne. He's our welcoming committee."

Warmly, Mr. Washburne shook the hand of his old friend the President-elect of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, a fellow politician from Illinois, who was supposed to be murdered later on in the day at Baltimore.

"This is Ward Hill Lamon," Lincoln indicated the thick-set man, who withdrew his right hand from his pocket to shake the hand of Washburne, who stared dumbly at Lamon's hand, ablaze with what looked to be barbarous jewelry.

Lincoln laughed. "Hill, when you're in the big city you take your brass knuckles off."

"It's in *this* city that I better keep them on." And Washburne noticed that Lamon—who spoke with a Southern accent—did exactly that. Meanwhile, Pinkerton had moved on ahead, studying the passers-by with such suspicion that he himself began to attract attention. Lincoln said what Washburne was thinking. "Mr. Pinkerton is what they call a detective, and detectives always make quite a fuss trying not to be noticed."

To Washburne's relief, no one recognized Lincoln. But then he himself had been in a moment's doubt when Lincoln had pushed down his collar, to reveal a short, glossy black beard that entirely changed the shape—and expression—of his face.

"Is it false?" Washburne stared hard. They were now standing beneath a huge poster of "Abraham Lincoln, the President-elect. Welcome to Washington City." The clean-shaven face of the poster was hard, even harsh-looking, while the bearded face looked weary but amiable. To Washburne, the President-elect resembled a prosperous downstate Illinois farmer come to market.

"No, it's real. What you might call an adornment. I had to do something useful on the train from Springfield." Lincoln leapt to one side as two huge black women carrying a tub of pork sausage meat hurried toward the cars. Then Pinkerton motioned that they were to follow him outside.

As they moved toward the door of the depot, Washburne said, "I've hired a carriage. Governor Seward was supposed to meet us here. But he must've overslept. We've put you up at Willard's Hotel. General Scott thinks you'll be safer there than in that house we found for you."

Lincoln did not answer. Washburne wondered if he was listening. Outside the depot, the shrunken, wintry sun resembled a small, pale, yellow seal affixed to the parchment-gray sky to the left of where the Capitol dome should have been but was not. Instead, from the round marble base, reminiscent of one of Gautier's white wedding cakes, a large crane was silhouetted against the sky like a gallows.

"They took the old lid off, I see." Lincoln ignored Pinkerton's efforts to get him into the waiting barouche.

"God knows when they'll get the new one on," said Washburne. "There's talk in Congress that we should just leave it the way it is."

"No." Lincoln shivered suddenly. "I always forget," he said, "how cold the South gets in winter."

The four men climbed into the carriage. Pinkerton sat next to the driver. Lamon sat with his back to the driver's seat while Lincoln and Washburne shared the back seat. Washburne noticed that Lincoln never let go of the grip-sack. Even while seated, he clutched it so hard that the huge knuckles of his hand were white.

"The crown jewels?" Washburne indicated the case. Lincoln laughed, but did not release his hold on the handle. "My certificate of good character. It's the inaugural address. I gave it to my son Bob to look after and he mislaid it in Harrisburg. The only copy there is!" Lincoln winced visibly at the memory. "We had to go through two tons of luggage to find it. I could've killed that boy. Anyway, I've carried it ever since."

"We're all sort of curious to hear what you'll say. . . ." began Washburne.

But Lincoln was not to be drawn out. "I see there's been some new building going on." He looked out the window at the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, where the great hotels were lined up like so many brick barracks interspersed with saloons and shops. Near the corner of Sixth Street was Brown's Hotel.

"Brown's was here when you were here in the forties."

Lincoln nodded. "Mrs. Lincoln and I spent our first night in Washington there. Then we moved to a boarding house with the two boys, who were not as popular as they ought to have been. The Widow Spriggs, our landlady was called."

On Twelfth Street there was the Kirkwood House and, finally, on the corner of Fourteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue stood the center of the city's political and social life, Willard's Hotel, nicely situated opposite the Treasury Building, which was placed—most symbolically, everyone thought—in a line with the hotel and the President's House.

At six-thirty in the morning the city was not yet properly awake. The hacks that were usually lined up in front of each hotel were not to be seen. Only Negroes—slave and free—were on the move, bringing food to the hotels, cleaning the stairs of the houses and taverns, moving briskly in the cold.

"I see they've made a stab at paving the avenue," said Lincoln, as the carriage skittered over cobbles so ill set that they made the avenue look even more like a vast, wild field than plain frozen mud might have done. "Not a very serious stab," he added.

The original city planners had intended that the President's House, at the end of Pennsylvania Avenue, should face, in constitutional harmony, the Capitol. But the Treasury Building now blocked most of the view of the Executive Mansion, while the rest was hidden by a large, windowless red-brick building, which intrigued Lincoln. "That's new. What is it? A prison?"

"No. That's President Buchanan's barn. He's very proud of it. In fact, it's about the only thing he's done in four years."

A horsecar rattled into view, only half full at this

early hour; the stove at the back of the car smoked badly.

"The trolleys are since your time," said Washburne. "They now go all the way from the Navy Yard to Georgetown. That's six miles," Washburne added, aware that he had once again lost his old friend's attention. The curiously lidded left eye—like a frog's—was half shut, always a sign that its owner was either deep in thought or mortally tired.

The main entrance to Willard's Hotel was at the corner where Fourteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue met. Bare trees sprouted from the brick sidewalk to either side of the door; farther down the avenue a small Greek temple had been completely enveloped by the huge hotel.

"You remember the old Presbyterian church?" Washburne was beginning to feel like a city guide. "Well, now it's a part of Willard's. It's a concert hall. The Peace Conference is meeting there." He examined Lincoln's face to see what his reaction might be, but there was none.

The carriage stopped at the main door. A uniformed Negro helped the men out of the carriage. "Baggage, gentlemen?"

"By the next train," said Lincoln.

"But, gentlemen—" Pinkerton spun the man to one side. "This way," Pinkerton said, darting into the hotel.

"A very forceful individual," Lincoln observed, with a smile.

Inside the lobby, a half-dozen black porters dozed on their feet while an assistant manager of uncommon whiteness—as if in deliberate hierarchical contrast to the staff—examined a heap of letters at his marble counter. The lobby was high-ceilinged and smelled of coal smoke. Huge dark armchairs were set haphazardly about the room, each with its shining spittoon to hand. Benches of horsehair lined the walls. A few forlorn guests stood surrounded by luggage waiting to be taken away.

Pinkerton caught the assistant manager's attention by slamming his fist on the marble counter. What had been the whitest of faces turned pink with irritation; then even whiter than before when Pinkerton whispered in his ear. The assistant manager hurried from behind his reception counter, shook Washburne's hand, and said in a voice that broke with tension, "Welcome to Willard's Hotel, Mr. President."

"This is the President," said Washburne, indicating Lincoln.

"President-elect," said Lincoln. "Let's not tempt fate. There's still ten days to go yet."

"Your rooms, sir, aren't ready." The assistant manager addressed Lamon, who had taken Washburne's place as Lincoln in his mind. "You see, we didn't expect you until this afternoon, and Mr. William Dodge, of New York—he's the merchant prince, a valued customer—is in Parlor Suite Number Six, and as it's only six-thirty-four he's not even up yet, I'm fairly certain . . ."

Lincoln turned to Lamon. "You work this out." At that moment an aged white porter approached Washburne and, in a pronounced brogue, said, "Well, Mr. Washburne, sir, I see you've brought us a President."

"This is Mike," said Washburne to Lincoln, "the most cunning man in the city."

"So cunning, sir, that he'll take you straight to Governor Seward." With that, Lincoln and Washburne were led into the main dining room, where Seward sat alone at the end of a long table, puffing a cigar, eyes half-closed. Back of him, waiters were placing chafing dishes on a huge buffet; otherwise, the vast room was empty.

At the sight of Lincoln, Seward sprang to his feet; he was not, Washburne noted, much taller standing than seated. Once red-haired, now white-haired, large-nosed, pale-eyed, longtime master of the state of New York, not to mention of the youthful Republican Party, as well as President-that-might-have-been had Lincoln's managers not outmaneuvered his managers at the Chicago convention, William H. Seward was seven years older than his rival, the new President, whose hand he now shook, saying in a husky voice, richly seasoned by a lifetime's addiction to cigar smoke and snuff, "You're every bit as tall as I'd thought you'd be, Mr. Lincoln." Seward looked up at Lincoln, who was exactly a foot taller than he. "I never really got a good look at you when we met for those two minutes during the campaign."

"And you're as handsome, Governor, as your portraits." Lincoln bowed like a jackknife—a droll, swift effect, thought Washburne, delighted to be present at the first real meeting of the great rivals who had threatened to divide the six-year-old Republican Party between the free-the-slaves-at-any-cost abolitionists occasionally represented, if not exactly led, by Seward, and the more moderate no-extension-of-slavery Westerners represented by Lincoln, a successful railroad lawyer and political failure: one term in the House of Representatives twelve years ago; one lost race for the Senate two years ago; and now the presidency. Even Lincoln's old friend Washburne still found it hard to believe that such an incredible political miracle had indeed taken place. But then Washburne was not alone in being unable to figure out just how it was that Lincoln had managed to seize the nomination from Governor Seward and then gone on to defeat the Northern Democratic candidate, the famous Stephen A. Douglas—who had so decisively defeated *him* for the Senate—as well as two other candidates, the Southern Democratic candidate, John C. Breckinridge, and the Whig John Bell. With not quite 40 percent of the total vote, Lincoln was very much a minority President; but he was President.

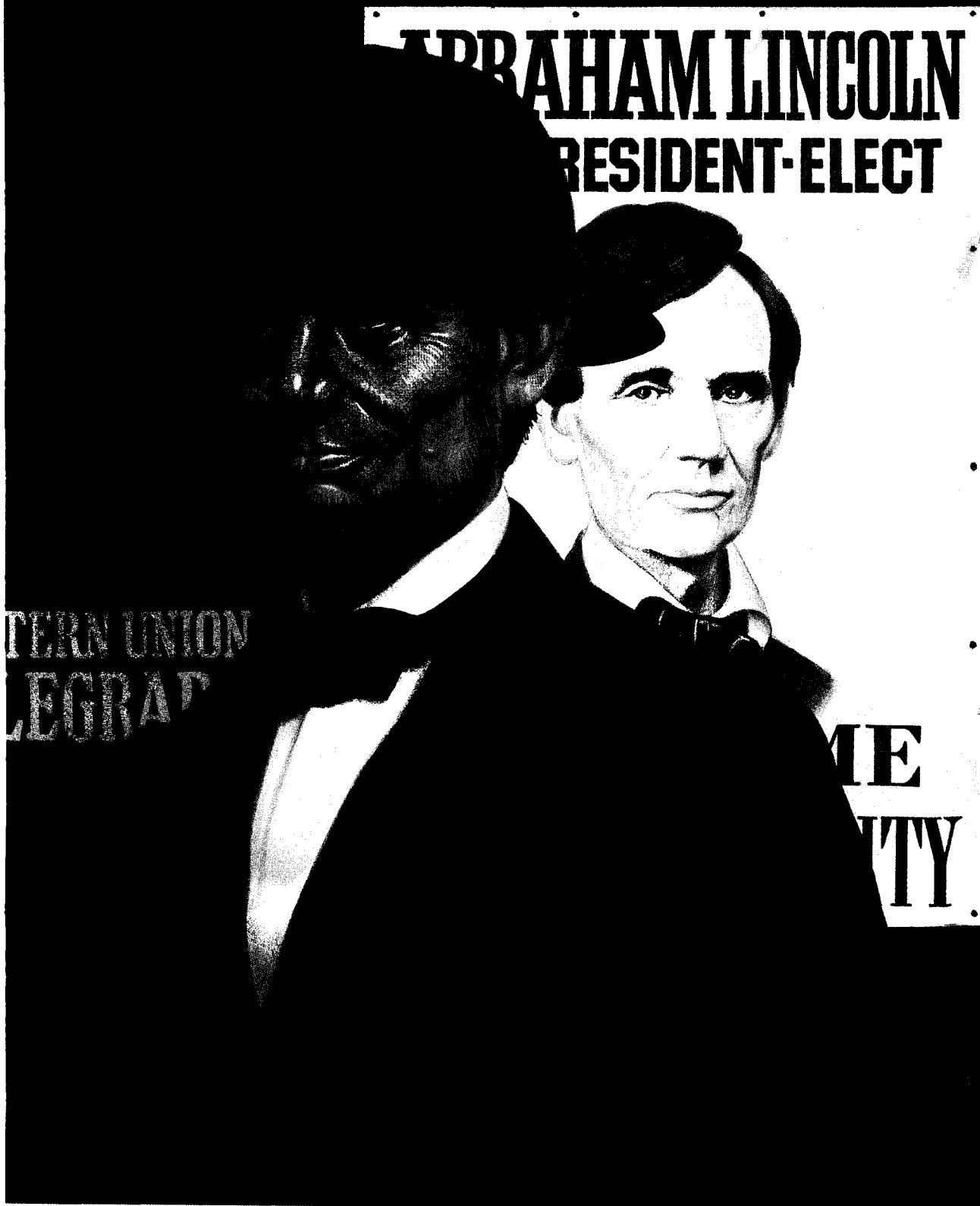
Seward motioned for Lincoln to sit at the head of the table with himself to the right and Washburne to the left. When Seward called for a waiter, he was greeted with a hoot of laughter. "We don't serve nothin' till eight."

"Mike!" shouted Washburne. The old porter moved amongst the waiters; in a matter of minutes, they were breakfasting on the first Potomac shad of the year.

"I guess this will be about the last time you'll ever be able to eat in here." Seward helped himself liberally to the shad's roe.

"I'm sure that there will be worse privations in store for





me." Lincoln munched an apple. A teetotaler like Washburne, Lincoln was also, unlike his friend, averse to food in general. For several years, Washburne, stout and rosy, had been urging Lincoln to eat more, if only to cure himself of a constipation so severe that he seldom moved his bowels more than once a week and was obliged to drink by the gallon a terrifying laxative called blue mass. But Lincoln looked healthy enough, thought Washburne, if too lean; and he was strong as the proverbial ox; could lift from the floor, with arm outstretched, a heavy ax at the shaft's end.

When the fascinated waiters had moved out of earshot—and Mike had moved to stand guard at the door—Lincoln said to Seward, in a low voice, "I will never live this down, sneaking like a thief into the capital."

"Sir, the plot was real." Seward sneezed; then blew his nose loudly in a yellow silk handkerchief.

Washburne substituted for the momentarily incapacitated leader. He turned to Lincoln: "As your car was passing through Baltimore—they pull it by horses, you know, between the two depots—a gang of plug-uglies were planning to waylay you then and there."

"But with sufficient guards—"

Seward interrupted Lincoln with a wave of an unlit cigar. "There wasn't time between when we got news of the plot and your arrival in Baltimore. So General Scott insisted you come as you did, with both houses of Congress informally concurring." Seward looked to Washburne, who nodded gravely, as sole representative of the lower house.

Lincoln stretched his arms until his back made a creaking sound. "I can't say I'd have objected too much to getting shot. I tell you I thought that trip would never end. There is nothing more like eternity than a train ride of twelve days, unless," he added, "it's two people and a ham, as my father-in-law used to say." Seward chuckled and lit his cigar.

"The trip sounded like a triumph, from what we read in the press," said Washburne.

"Well, I've never given so many speeches and said so little. So I suppose it was remarkable in that."

Seward blew cigar smoke at the ceiling. "I *was* troubled to read, sir, that you said somewhere along the line that no great harm had been done, even though six states have already left the Union and even more are threatening to go, while rebels are busy seizing federal property all the way from Florida to North Carolina."

"I said no harm to *anyone* has been done." Lincoln's voice was even. "As yet."

The last monosyllable had its effect on both Seward and Washburne.

"You know," said Seward, trying a different tack, "that I am supposed to be the war-to-the-knife fellow—"

"The conflict is 'irrepressible' is what you said." Lincoln smiled. "That's how you got me the nomination."

"Damnedest stupidest speech I ever gave!" Seward paused. "I know you don't drink or smoke. Do you draw the line at profanity, too?"

"Why, no! Fact, once when I was out on the circuit in

Illinois, a stranger offered me whiskey and I said no, I don't drink, and then he gave me a chew of tobacco and I said no, I don't chew, and then he said, 'Well, I've found that those with damned few vices have damned few virtues.' "

Over the years, Washburne had heard Lincoln tell this particular story a dozen times; and the wording never varied. Lincoln's little stories tended to come at regular intervals, as a form of punctuation—or evasion. But Lincoln was also a master of the long, cumulative, funny story; and many times Washburne had sat at the stove of some backwoods Illinois tavern when the lawyers on circuit would compete in storytelling, and it was always Lincoln who won. Once he had got a group to laugh at the first detail, he would then add, relentlessly, more and more wilder and wilder details, until men choked with laughter as the easy tenor voice continued, with all due gravity, to make them positively drunk with laughter. He was equally impressive as a speaker on those occasions when he was carefully prepared. But then, except as a humorist, he had no naturally easy way with an audience. He needed a well-prepared brief. Washburne hoped that the gripsack on the chair next to Lincoln contained such a brief.

Seward suggested that Lincoln visit his new house later in the day and meet the outgoing President, Mr. James Buchanan. "A harmless old thing," said Seward.

Washburne could not let that go easily. "Harmless? He let the rebels in Florida seize federal property at Pensacola and Key West. He let the rebels in South Carolina occupy Fort Moultrie, a *federal* fort . . ."

"I don't think Mr. Buchanan can be held entirely responsible." Seward was mild. "After all, they gave us plenty of warning. They said that if our friend here was elected President, they'd leave the Union. And he was. And they did."

"Along with Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and . . . and Virginia, too, I'll bet!"

"What about Virginia?" Lincoln was suddenly alert. "Virginia is the key to this particular tough lock."

Seward shrugged. "The so-called Peace Conference has been in session for two weeks now with old President Tyler—the last of the Virginians—presiding."

"What is the mood?"

"Like that of most peace congresses—very warlike."

"If Virginia goes . . ." Lincoln stopped.

"There will be war," said Washburne.

Seward said nothing; but he studied Lincoln closely for some sign of intent. The face gave nothing away. Then, almost casually, Seward said, "You know, in a way, we are well rid of those cotton republics—and their problem of slavery."

"Where is your 'irrepressible conflict'?" Lincoln smiled—somewhat weakly, thought Washburne; then Washburne attacked a plate of fried oysters, a delicacy unknown in his early days, and all the more to be savored at Washington City.

"Highly *repressible* if we let our erring sisters—poor fool-

ish ladies—go in peace. Then we can turn our attention to Canada, to Mexico, to the Indies—”

“Mr. Seward, you dream of empire for a government which has just lost half its military stations to homegrown rebels.”

Seward made a gracious arabesque with his cigar. “Let the mosquitoes occupy those infernal forts. Have you ever seen the South?”

“I was in New Orleans once,” said Lincoln, “and,” he added with a certain grimness, “I am Kentucky-born, as the world knows.”

“A *border* state,” said Washburne.

“A *slave* border state,” said Lincoln.

“When I was governor of New York”—Seward was dreamy—“I used to go over to Canada every chance I could get. And you know those Canadians, the ones who speak English—the best of the lot—are eager to join our Union.”

“I seem to recall,” said Lincoln, putting down his second apple core and pushing his chair away from the table, “that on the two occasions that we invaded Canada—in the Revolution and then again in 1812—they put up quite a fight to stay *out* of our Union.”

“Misunderstandings of the day.” Seward was airy. “That’s all. They’re different now.”

Lincoln got to his feet. “We’ve got a few misunderstandings of our own now to deal with before we go traipsing off into Canada. We’ve also got—you and I—some Cabinet-making to do.”

“Will you take dinner with me tonight?” asked Seward.

“With pleasure. Now I’m going to get some sleep. There was a drunk in my car last night who kept on singing ‘Dixie’ over and over again.”

“Not our favorite song,” said Washburne.

“No, sir, it is not.” Lincoln started toward the door where the aged Mike stood guard; then he paused. “‘Look away, look away, Dixie Land!’” Lincoln quoted the song’s chorus; he frowned. “Look away to *what*?”

“Or *from* what?” said Seward.

“Plainly, from me. But we shall change that.” He turned to Seward. “You don’t remember, Mr. Seward, but years ago, you and I once spoke together at Tremont Temple in Boston . . .”

“In September of 1848. You were canvassing New England for Zachary Taylor, and you wore a long linen duster in the street. I thought *you’d* forgotten.”

“And you were wearing yellow pantaloons like the ones you’re wearing now. I guess politicians like us never forget anything. Good morning, gentlemen.” With that, Lincoln was gone.

Washburne turned to Seward. “What do you think, Mr. Seward?”

Seward frowned. “I don’t know. I’m not used to prairie statesmen, if you’ll forgive me, Mr. Washburne.”

“Forgiven. After all, you and I are used to each other. But Abe isn’t really Western, you know. In fact, he isn’t really like other people.”

“In what way? I thought he was very much your typical

Western politician, man of the people, splitter of rails, that kind of thing.”

Washburne laughed. “That was all made up for the campaign.”

“You mean Honest Abe the Rail-Splitter is a fraud?”

“Yes and no. I’m sure he split a rail or two in his youth, but he’s always been a politician and a lawyer. The honest part is true, of course. But all the rest was just to get out the vote at home.”

“And here I thought we had another ‘Tippecanoe’ Harrison on our hands.”

“No, Mr. Seward, what we’ve got on our hands is a very complicated, secretive sort of man. Don’t underestimate him.”

Seward stared at Washburne to see if this might be some kind of obscure Western joke. When he saw that Washburne was serious, he smiled what journalists referred to as “Seward’s sly, Jesuit smile.” “Well, I don’t think I’m ever apt to do that, considering this peculiar line of work we’re in.”

“You’ll be his secretary of state, won’t you?”

Seward nodded. “That’s the plan. *If* we see eye to eye.”

“What’s your condition?”

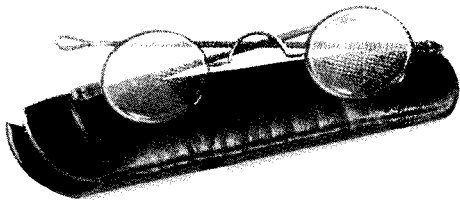
“That we agree on the rest of the Cabinet. I would like to see a Cabinet of like-minded men. I’m a Whig. I’m a moderate. So’s Mr. Lincoln. So are most of our party’s leaders. But I’m afraid he’ll insist on including out-and-out abolitionists like Chase, and Whigs like Bates, and Democrats like Welles.”

“What’s wrong with that?” Washburne played the innocent. Actually, he knew Seward’s game—the so-called Albany Plan had been secretly formulated during the fall by Seward and his chief henchman, Thurlow Weed, the proprietor of the *Albany Evening Journal*. They wanted to exclude from the Cabinet such presidential contenders as Chase. They wanted, most ambitiously—not to mention unconstitutionally—to turn Lincoln into a figurehead; the actual administration of the country would be taken over by Seward, the party’s national leader and most famous man. Seward would be premier to Lincoln’s powerless monarch.

“I think it most statesmanlike,” said Washburne cautiously, “to bring together all the pro-Union elements—Democrats and abolitionists as well as Whigs and moderates. Even,” he smiled at Seward, “if some of them are rivals, like Chase. After all, he’s picked *you*, his principal rival.”

“I was.” Seward struck the elegiac note. “But no longer. I’m now too old ever to be the President.” Seward smiled to show that he was serious, thereby convincing Washburne that he was not. “But to have Chase and the others on the premises may be too much for him to handle. Well, we’ll see, won’t we?”

Seward slid his arm companionably through Washburne’s. As the two men left the dining room, the doors were thrown open for the first breakfasters of the day—a horde of pale children, who shouted and wept as their grim-faced mothers herded them with pleas and cuffs to the buffet table.



DAVID HEROLD STARED AT THE FRONT PAGE OF THE *Evening Star*; then he did something that he had never done before: he actually bought a copy of the paper from the ancient Negro who had been selling newspapers at the corner of H and Sixth Streets for all of David's eighteen years.

"He here!" said the old man, giggling. "He snuck in like a chicken thief."

As David walked down H Street, he read the *Star's* special story of the President-elect's secret arrival in the city. There were not many facts. Apparently, Mrs. Lincoln and their three sons and the rest of the President-elect's party would arrive in the afternoon, as originally planned. But for reasons not yet known, Mr. Lincoln and two detectives had arrived on the overnight cars; and they had been observed in the lobby of Willard's Hotel at about seven in the morning.

David stopped in front of Number 541 H Street, a narrow, lead-colored, four-story brick house with a yard to one side, containing a wooden shack and a number of dispirited chickens. An outside staircase connected the second floor with the street, permanently shadowing the ground floor. On the second floor a pair of firm hands were pounding music out of a piano not entirely in tune.

"Hey, Annie!" David shouted; then shouted again. The head of an eighteen-year-old girl appeared at the upstairs window.

"I'm practicing."

"Lincoln's here! He snuck in this morning. Just like a"—David sought for novelty but not hard enough—"some old chicken thief! It's in the *Star*."

"Come on up."

David hurried up the brick steps, opened the door, found himself face to face with Annie's mother, who was carrying a tray of food. "Oh, Mrs. Surratt, it's me."

"I heard you, David. And I've already heard that Mr. Lincoln's here." Mrs. Surratt was a handsome auburn-haired woman with a body that David, who read romantic stories in yellow covers, knew was Junoesque. In some ways he found Mrs. Surratt more to his taste than her daughter; and this curious preference convinced him that he was probably the monster of depravity that his seven sisters liked to claim he was.

"How's Mr. Surratt?" Thought of the seven sisters reminded him of his manners.

"We hope for the best. I try to get him to eat. But he just—fades away." Mrs. Surratt motioned for David to precede her into the front parlor.

David crossed the flowered Brussels carpet, uncomfortably aware of the terminal state of his huge cracked leather shoes.

In the parlor, Annie sat at the piano, with one hand raised over the keyboard; pretty as a picture, thought David, who had seen the actual picture that she was imitating in the window of Jarman's music store on O Street, from an advertisement for Chickering's pianoforte.

"Here's the paper," he said, putting it in her poised and posed hand. "I bought it," he added. Usually David borrowed newspapers; or stole them. Despite the gentility of David's mother—widow of a government employee who had left her with eight children and a house near the Navy Yard—David had grown up with a pack of wild Washington boys, all of them Southern—or Southron, as they called themselves—and devoted to mischief of every sort. They were only a cut above the Baltimore plug-uglies, those real street toughs who were now threatening to invade the city and disrupt the President's inaugural.

"It was the plug-uglies, I guess, that made him sneak through Baltimore."

Annie read the paper as if it were a sheet of difficult music.

The Surratts and the Herolds had been acquaintances for close to a generation; and they thought of Washington as a Southern city, which it was—and a Maryland city at that, which meant a population somewhat more volatile than that of staid neighboring Virginia, whose claim to the city was nearly as substantial as Maryland's. The District of Columbia was an anomalous ten-mile-square parallelogram carved out of Maryland and bounded by the Potomac River and Virginia.

Annie put down the newspaper and turned toward David, who was slumped on his spine in a rocking chair; the black cloth of his trousers, he noticed glumly, was so shiny that the dull February light was reflected in its dark folds. David looked without pleasure at his own short legs; he was too thin, he knew, and had recently stopped growing; just one inch short of a proper height. Even so, girls liked him. But then why shouldn't they? He had seven sisters. There was nothing on earth that he did not know about the other sex. If only he had had a brother. . . .

"You've got to fix those shoes, David." Annie made a face. Plainly, the broken shoes were smelly to others.

David hid his feet under the rocker; he seldom bathed between Christmas and Easter. In fact, if it were not for certain young ladies in Marble Alley, he would never bathe; would smell like the rest of the wild boys—a not unpleasant odor of moist earth mixed with tobacco smoke. "I guess I'll have to take that job at Thompson's."

"Prescription clerk?"

David nodded. He was related to the owner of Thompson's Drug Store, near the corner of Fifteenth and New York Avenue, close by the White House. Over the years, David had done odd jobs for Mr. Thompson. Now, at Mrs. Herold's insistence, he would be prescription clerk and make what she liked to call "a living wage"; which is what she, and those of the sisters who were not married, each did

in order to keep up the Navy Yard house. Mrs. Herold herself presided over a furniture shop.

"It's about time," said Annie, and smiled at him. He liked her best of the nice girls he knew; he liked to listen to her play piano; he liked the notion of liking her the best of all. "He's crazy, to come here." Annie folded the newspaper as if it were indeed sheet music and placed it behind "Listen to the Mocking Bird," a song especially written for President Buchanan's niece.

"Who?"

"Lincoln. They'll kill him."

"Who'll kill him?" asked Mrs. Surratt, coming in from the back parlor with the untouched tray.

"Everybody, Mother. You know how the wild boys around here go on."

Mrs. Surratt put down the tray on a round table covered with green velvet, where, in frames, the family pictures were ranged around a crucifix and a rosary.

"I've heard," she said, "that there was a plot to kill him in Baltimore. I mean I heard it *before* today. You know how they talk at the bar in Surrattsville."

"And drink!" Annie was ungracious. "But Maryland's going to secede any minute now, and so will Virginia, and then what on earth will Mr. Lincoln want to be in Washington for? I mean, this is a Southern city, and with those two states out of the Union this is a Southern city spang in the middle of the Confederacy."

"Over in Richmond they're saying that *our* President, Mr. Davis, wants Washington for *his* capital." Mrs. Surratt picked up the rosary; idly, she fingered beads. "Your brother Isaac says that Mr. Lincoln won't be inaugurated here . . ."

"What'll drive him out?" asked David.

". . . or anywhere else on this earth," Mrs. Surratt finished. Then she whispered a prayer to herself, and David looked away, embarrassed as always by any outward sign of strange religion.

Raptly, David stared at the Bleeding Heart of Jesus that hung over the fireplace, and thought of dinner. "I saw some Northern soldier boys at the depot." David made his contribution. "They had piled up so many saddles, you couldn't get to the cars through the mess."

"I wish they'd just go and leave us in peace." Mrs. Surratt looked sad and, to David's eyes, beautiful. He was, he liked to think, something of a connoisseur of feminine beauty. Ever since he was fourteen, he had had the run of Sal Austin's parlors, where the most attractive girls in the city could be found. Sal, christened Sarah, was an old friend of his mother's, and though Mrs. Herold was horrified at the extent and nature of Sal's fall in the world, she was most respectful of her old friend's great wealth; and when Sal offered to give David work as a handyman at her mansion in Marble Alley, midway between Pennsylvania and Missouri avenues, Mrs. Herold saw no harm in it. "Because David is too young to be corrupted." The sisters thought this very funny; so did David. For a year and a half he had known pleasure of a sort unknown to the wild boys—doubly unknown because he was not foolish

enough, even at fourteen, to go out of his way to excite envy. He never said where he worked; made no response whenever a wild boy would talk knowingly of Sal or her rival Julia's establishment across the Alley.

The girls enjoyed him nearly as much as he enjoyed them; they also made him wash, an unnatural activity that he accepted as a small price to pay for so many carnal privileges. When Sal, finally, got a full-time man to maintain her gilded premises, she said, "Any time you want to pay a call, Davey, you come right along." And he still did, from time to time. "I think the world of that mother of yours, Davey, I really do! Eight children! I tell you she is a Christian martyr. Because she could have had the life, too. But didn't. Such a waste!"

Mrs. Surratt would have been mortified, thought David, if she could have known what wickedness was unfolding in his adolescent mind. But Mrs. Surratt was a good woman, and thought only of murder. "I'm certain they will attempt something between now and next week . . ."

"Who's 'they,' Mother?"

"The seceshers."

"Like us?" Annie played a bar of "Dixie."

"Heaven forbid, *not* like us! But Isaac tells me that every day there are people coming across the Long Bridge, coming from as far away as Richmond, with guns and ammunition."

"There's a bunch of the wild boys who drill every day," said David. "They call themselves the National Volunteers."

"You think they'd really try to stop the inaugural?" Annie shut the piano; no more "Dixie."

Mrs. Surratt nodded. "Yes. I think they will try, and I think they will succeed."

"I think so, too," said David, who had never before seen the wild boys so fired up with hatred of Yankees in general, and of Mr. Lincoln in particular.

The three sat a moment in silence. Then Mrs. Surratt said, "Isaac's gone to Richmond, Annie. And I think he's gone for good."

"You mean he won't *ever* come back?"

"Not until this is a Southern city, if it ever is."

"But Virginia's still in the Union, Mother."

"By April, Isaac says, Virginia will have gone, too. Along with Maryland."

"Then there will be war, won't there, Mother?"

"That depends on Mr. Lincoln," said Mrs. Surratt. "Or whoever takes his place as the Yankee President."

"And all because of those crazy preachers in the North who want to free our darkies, who wouldn't know what to do with themselves if they were free!" Annie jumped to her feet. "Come on, David. Let's go to Willard's. I want to get a good look at the devil—before they shoot him."

Mrs. Surratt made a warning gesture. "Don't talk like that in front of strangers."

"Don't be silly, Mother. I'm not an idiot."

"We're an occupied city, for now," said Mrs. Surratt, crossing herself as she returned the rosary to its place on the crucifix.

AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, SEWARD AND Lincoln—the latter still unrecognized—crossed from Willard's to the Executive Mansion, known to those few Americans who were not addicted to the prevailing Latinate English of the nation's orators as the President's House or just plain White House. The single guard at the gate did not even look at the two soberly dressed statesmen, who proceeded up the iced-over, deep-rutted driveway to the main portico, from whose columns the paint was peeling; the glass of the front windows was streaked with dust.

"Last time I was here it was 1848." Lincoln looked about with some curiosity.

"Your friend Mr. Polk was in residence then."

Lincoln nodded. "But never friendly to me, particularly after I attacked his Mexican War."

"Ah, the irrepressible speeches of one's youth!" Seward made a comical face. "You'll be hearing a lot about that speech of yours before you're done."

Lincoln grimaced. "I know. I know. Words are hostages to fortune, they say. The only problem is we never know in advance just what the fortune is."

At the front door, a short, elderly Irish usher stopped them. "State your business, gentlemen. The President is *not* available. He's in Cabinet."

"Tell the President," said Seward, "that Mr. Abraham Lincoln has come to pay a call."

The usher turned very red in the face. "By heaven, if it isn't old Abe himself! Oh, forgive me, Your Excellency . . ."

"It's heaven I can't forgive, for making me old."

"Well, sir, they call *me* old Edward, sir. Edward McManus. I've been doorkeeper since President Taylor."

"Then I shall leave the door just as it is, in your good hands."

Old Edward smiled, revealing few teeth, dark gums. He led them across the musty entrance hall and into the Red Room, just off the foot of the great staircase. "If you'll wait here, sir, I'll go fetch the President."

As the usher hurried upstairs, Lincoln and Seward looked about the Red Room, which was true to its name but shabby withal. Lincoln touched a red damask curtain from which pieces had been hacked.

"Visitors like their souvenirs," said Seward. "When I was governor of New York, at every reception I'd have a guard with a gun next to every curtain."

"Did you get reelected?"

Seward laughed. "I did. In fact—"

But at that moment, President James Buchanan hurried—or flurried, thought Seward—into the room. He was a tall man, with white hair and a twisted neck, which meant that his left cheek seemed always about to rest on his left shoulder. One eye had a squint, which often made the old man look as if he were winking slyly at you, as if his words were not to be taken seriously.

"Mr. Lincoln! I didn't expect you until tomorrow! Mr. Seward, too. What an honor for us. Where is my niece?"

This was addressed directly to Lincoln, who said, very gravely, "On my honor, I have not misplaced your niece, Mr. President."

"Of course not. You've never met her. Nor have I. That is, nor do I *know* where she is at the moment. She is looking forward so much to showing Mrs. Lincoln around the Mansion." A lifelong bachelor, Buchanan was sustained by his niece Harriet Lane, of whom a Washington wit had been heard to say, "There is no power *behind* the throne, either."

"We just wanted to pay our respects, sir. . . ." Lincoln began to move toward the door. But Buchanan took his arm, firmly.

"You must meet the Cabinet. We're having a special meeting. Texas left the Union this morning. We just got the official word . . ."

They were now in the main hall. Servants—black and white—had begun to appear, to get a glimpse of the new President.

"What answer do you make to the . . . seceders?" Although Lincoln's usual word was "rebels," he used the softer word, because the Democrat Buchanan was close to the Southern wing of his party, as represented by his own Vice-President, John C. Breckinridge.

"*You* will give us inspiration, let's hope." Buchanan bowed to Seward, who could not help but think that this run-of-the-mill Pennsylvanian politician had found his true niche not as President but during the time that he had been America's minister to England.

As the three men moved up the main staircase, Buchanan said, "The house is a good deal smaller than it looks. Actually, we're quite crowded up here. Our private rooms are at this end while the offices are at the other end, and this corridor that connects the two is for me like the River Styx. Each day I pass like a doomed soul through crowds of people, all waiting to be given something for nothing."

They were now at the top of the stairs, the ominous dark corridor before them. "I was never up here before," said Lincoln.

"You had no private business with Mr. Polk?" Seward lit a cigar; then, to the President, "Have I your leave?"

"By all means, sir." Buchanan indicated four large doors to the left and two doors to the right. "Those are the bedrooms. And there is the bathroom. The taps do not work, of course. Nothing really does here." Buchanan led them down the dusty hall, whose only illumination came from a single large window at the living-quarters end. Midway to the offices, the President showed them a sitting room that followed the shape of the oval Blue Room below. The room was bleakly furnished, with horsehair sofas and empty bookcases. A number of paintings hung on the walls; but they were so darkened by time and dirt that it was hard to tell who or what they were of. "This is our only *private* parlor. Even so, the people barge in on you."

The President then led them down the corridor to a wooden railing with a gate. "This is where Hades begins," he said, unlatching the gate. Back of the railing was an



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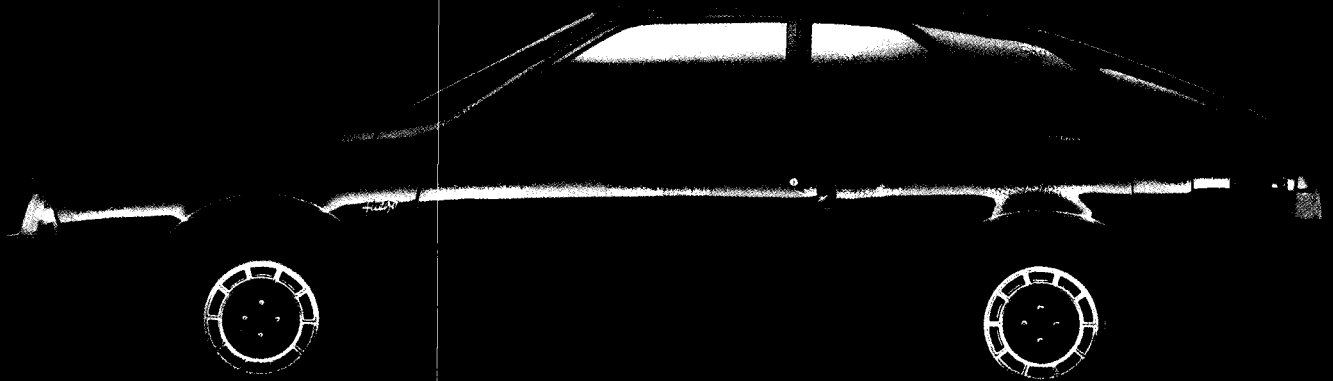
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empty desk, and behind the desk there was a waiting room lined with benches that always put Seward in mind of a small-town railway depot. "This is where the other Edward sits, only he's not here. I can't think why. He's a colored man; and most respectable. He decides who goes into the waiting room. Then here on the left is the secretary's office, which is quite as large as mine, with a small room just off it, which is where Harriet, my niece, keeps the linen. Would you like to see these offices?"

"No, sir." Seward could tell that Lincoln was prepared for flight. But Old Buck, as the President was popularly and unpopularity known, was inexorable. "Then the Cabinet meets right here, just off the clerk's office, as you can see, and inside it connects with the President's office, which is in the corner there, and slightly larger, thank Heaven."

Buchanan had now thrown open the door to the Cabinet room. The half-dozen men who were seated at the green-baize-covered table got to their feet as the President ushered Lincoln and Seward into the room. "Gentlemen, the President-elect."

Briskly, Lincoln shook hands with each man. Seward noticed that he paused for a moment as he shook the hand of the attorney-general, Edwin M. Stanton, a large, bald-headed, asthmatic man with steel-rimmed spectacles and an unpleasant sneer, aimed now at Lincoln, who said, somewhat quizzically, "Well, Mr. Stanton, we meet again."

"Yes, we do . . . sir."

Lincoln turned to the others. "Five years ago we were a pair of lawyers trying to determine whether Mr. McCormick's reaper was his reaper or someone else's."

"I remember . . . sir." Stanton stood very straight, his large paunch quivering slightly.

"Yes, Mr. Stanton. So do I."

Buchanan had now drawn Lincoln over to the window with its view of the southern part of the President's estate, bounded at the far end by the old canal, now an open sewer, and the Potomac River beyond. "In the summer, sir, the smell from that canal is absolutely unbearable," said Buchanan. "Drain the canal, I tell them. Or fill it in. Naturally, Congress does nothing. But they do let me use a little stone cottage out at the Soldiers' Home. I spend the summers there and I suggest that you use it, too, if you don't want the fever."

Lincoln was staring at a pile of white marble blocks, at whose center the base of an obelisk rose. "They've still not finished that monument to Washington?"

"No, sir. In fact, nothing is ever finished here! No dome on the Capitol. No street pavings. No streetlamps. Nothing's ever done to completion here except, sir, one thing." The old man's head now rested on his shoulder and the bad eye was entirely shut as, with a quiet joy, he pointed out the window. "There," he said. "Look!"

Lincoln stared at a huge red-brick wall. "The one thing that the Executive Mansion has dearly needed since Mr. Jefferson's time was a proper barn. But not a *wooden* barn, sir. No, sir. Not a barn that will catch fire or get the rot. No, sir. But a *brick* barn, sir. A barn built to outlast time itself.

You don't know the pleasure it has given me these last four years to see this beautiful barn slowly rise from that swamp they call the President's Park."

"And watch the Union fall apart," said Lincoln to Seward as the two men crossed the President's Park on the way to the War Department.

"He's well meaning, Old Buck," said Seward, pronouncing the ultimate political epitaph. "What was that between you and Stanton?"

Lincoln chuckled. "Well, Mr. Stanton was this big important lawyer on a patent case . . . sort of *your* territory, come to think of it. And I was the backwoods lawyer that was called in to help him out because I had political connections in Chicago, where the trial was supposed to be. Anyway, when the trial got moved to Cincinnati, I wasn't really needed, as he made absolutely clear. Fact, he cut me dead."

"He's a disagreeable man," said Seward. "But he's the best lawyer in the country. And he's one of us."

Lincoln gave Seward a sidelong glance. "In what sense? He's a Democrat. He was for Douglas, or so people say. He never says, I'm told."

"Last week he told the President that if he let Fort Sumter go without a fight, he would deserve impeachment."

"Well, well," said Lincoln; and no more. The small brick War Department was surrounded by thirty loud geese, which a farmer was doing his best to make move on, to the delight of two soldiers more or less on guard.

"I shall make no references to Rome and the Capitoline geese." Seward was fond of classical allusions. He knew his Tacitus; loved his Cicero.

"Please don't." Lincoln stared with some distaste at the unexpectedly rustic scene.

"Actually, General Scott has got himself a brand-new War Department across the way there, on Seventeenth Street. This building will only be for the Army, just as that one over there"—Seward pointed to a second small brick building—"is for the Navy. But the whole thing will be run from Seventeenth Street." Together the two men crossed the frozen mud field that was Seventeenth Street, where stood a large building with no guards at all, not even geese. This was the War Department. As they approached the main door, Seward asked Lincoln who ought to be secretary of war.

Lincoln's response was sharp. "Certainly *not* the man best qualified. I think that is already understood, isn't it?" For all Lincoln's serene amiability, Seward detected a sudden edge of true bitterness. As a minority President, Lincoln could reign only by placating certain great powers and dominations. As for ruling . . . It was Seward's view, on the morning of Saturday, February 23, 1861, that Lincoln would be fortunate if he could last out his term as the figurehead President of a mere rump of the dis-United States. Since the wealth and talent of this remaining fragment of the original Union was almost entirely in the North, specifically, in New York and New England, the inexperienced

outlander from the West would need a knowledgeable prime minister, a man from the wealthy part—himself, the party's leader. But Seward was in no hurry to impose himself and the so-called Albany Plan upon Lincoln. He was convinced that in the next nine days tumultuous events would make him so necessary to the new President that he would then be able to assert his dominance in order to avoid the war with the South that Lincoln might blunder into, exclude Chase and the Democrats from the Cabinet, and begin the creation of the new North American—South American and West Indian, too; why not?—empire that Seward felt would more than compensate them for the loss of the slave states.

Seward was no longer the abolitionist he had once been. He was now both more and less ambitious than when, in the very year that Lincoln had attacked Polk for making war on Mexico, he had been telling an audience in Cleveland that "slavery must be abolished, and you and I must do it." Now Seward was conciliatory on the matter in general; and beautifully vague in particular. On the other hand, Lincoln was still struggling with the words he had so proudly hurled in the face of President Polk: "Any people anywhere," Representative Lincoln had proclaimed to the Congress, "being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government . . ." Seward knew this so-called "right-of-revolution" speech by heart, as did every Southerner; and not a day passed that these words were not used to taunt the tall, awkward-moving man who was entering the War Department for the first time.

At seventy-four, Winfield Scott was general-in-chief of the Union armies, and at six feet four and a quarter inches, he was a quarter-inch taller than the new President. Estimates of his legendary weight seldom dropped below the three-hundred-pound mark.

General Scott received the Commander-in-Chief-elect in his ground-floor office—he was too large and too old to climb stairs with any ease. Although he suffered from gout, he still loved food and wine; loved glory and himself. The bejeweled red face was huge and mottled; a spider's web of tiny purple lines had netted the nose. Scott wore an elaborate uniform of his own design, with gleaming gold braid and massive epaulets. Like a glittering mountain he stood now before a painting of himself as the hero of the War of 1812. As Lincoln entered the room, the General waddled forward; they shook hands beneath a painting of Scott conquering Mexico in 1847.

"You have come, sir, when, as a nation, we are at the razor's edge." The old man's voice was still deep; but there was a tendency to quaver whenever he summoned up emotion, either real or simulated.

"It's a great privilege to meet you, General." Lincoln glanced at the painting of Scott storming Chapultepec—and looked away. Not an auspicious beginning, thought Seward. Lincoln had detested the Mexican War.

"Sit down, sir." Scott eased himself into a throne that had been designed for a very fat man to get in and out of with

relative ease. "I must confess, sir, I did not vote for you—" "Because you are a Virginian?"

"No, sir. I am a loyal Union man, which is why I am so relieved that you are here to prevent more disunion. I did not vote for you because I never vote."

"Well, General, I voted for you in 1852, when you were the last Whig candidate for President, and I was just about the last good Whig in Springfield." Seward wondered whether or not this was true. In the course of the morning, he had duly noted that Lincoln had the gift of flattery, a form of insincerity that Seward tended to think of as being peculiarly his own most delicate art. In any case, Seward regarded Scott as his own handiwork. After all, it had been Seward's idea to run the man for President; and Seward had written every single speech that Scott had delivered in the course of a disastrous campaign.

"I received," said the General, the voice of military command taking on a politician's tone, "one million three hundred eighty-six thousand five hundred and seventy-eight votes. Franklin Pierce"—as the old man said the name, the red face darkened—"got two hundred twenty thousand more votes than I. And now we are faced with a civil war. Because, sir, had I been elected, I would have strengthened the federal forts in the South. There would have been no trouble at Fort Sumter, because I would have made nearby Fort Moultrie impregnable, and Charleston would still be what it is meant to be—a harbor of the United States."

"What is to be done?" Lincoln's voice was soft.

Scott motioned to an aide who set up a map of the Union on an easel. Scott then picked up a ferule that lay beside his throne and pointed to the various military establishments throughout the South. He presented the bad news directly. With the exception of Forts Sumter and Pickens, the Federal forts either were in rebel hands—or would soon be. Seward then expected Scott to follow their agreed-upon line: Lincoln should say to the South, "Wayward sisters, go in peace." Although Scott said no such thing, he was hardly sanguine. "We have no fleet to speak of. This Administration has deliberately weakened our military forces. But then Mr. Floyd, the late secretary of war, is a secessionist and a traitor. You do not object to my candor, sir?"

"No, General. I had come to the same conclusion myself. Now if war *were* to come . . ." Lincoln paused. Seward sat on the edge of his chair. It had never occurred to him that Lincoln might actually have a plan and that that plan might involve a military action against the rebel states. Like most intelligent men, Seward thought that all intelligent men, given the same set of facts, would react as he did. During the past few hours, he had come to appreciate Lincoln's intelligence if not the rustic Western style; now this sallow-faced man, sprawled in an armchair, knees working their way to his chin, was saying, "If war were to come, how long would it take us to raise an army, build a fleet, make all necessary preparations?"

"Six months, sir. What we lack now are good officers. The best of our West Pointers are Southerners. From Jefferson Davis himself, the President of the Confederacy, to—"

Lincoln cut the old man short. "General, that is a title that I do not use nor acknowledge, while the Confederacy is a place that does not exist. Is that clear?"

Seward sat bolt upright. This man Lincoln was hard, all right; or so he sounded. Intelligent men were pliant; or so Seward chose to believe.

"Yes, sir. You are right, sir. Anyway, from Mr. Davis to Colonel Lee, all our best officers are Southern."

"Maybe you should've promoted a few more Northerners—and Westerners."

"Well, sir . . ." Vaguely, Scott gestured with his ferule, which in turn reminded him of the map. "Sir, I have already devised a plan, should it be necessary to restore the Union by force." Scott paused for some response from Lincoln, but there was none beyond attentiveness.

Scott continued without, as it were, the looked-for sign. "If Virginia and Maryland go out of the Union, we shall then be obliged to move the capital to Harrisburg or to Philadelphia . . ." Scott paused. Lincoln made no response; the face was impassive. Seward was growing definitely uneasy. What was this man's game? Seward, who enjoyed poker, rather thought that Lincoln was simply indulging himself in the cardplayer's bluff. Certainly, he hoped that that was what it was.

Scott, signless again, proceeded to divide the South with his stick. "I do not think that a straight assault on Maryland and Virginia will succeed. Virginia is the most populous of the Southern states, the wealthiest, the most ready for war. We should inflict what damage we can upon Virginia, but I would say, sir, that our hope is in the west. The Mississippi River is the key. Seize the river. Knock Mississippi out of the war and whatever sections of Tennessee and Kentucky may stand against us. Split the South into two parts, and each part will die for lack of the other."

Scott paused. Lincoln slowly straightened up. "Well, I guess we'd better persuade Virginia and Maryland to stay in the Union a while longer." Seward gave an audible sigh of relief. This was the Lincoln that he had been inventing for himself ever since the election: the cautious vacillator—a Western Jesuit, in fact.

As Lincoln rose, an aide pulled Scott to his feet. "By the way, General, what would you do about Fort Sumter?"

"I would hold out as long as possible."

"And then?"

"I would evacuate the fort. Otherwise, Major Anderson and all his men will be killed or seized. We have not the sea power to dominate Charleston Harbor."

"An honor to meet you, General." Lincoln turned to Seward. "My wife and family should be arriving any minute now."

"Well, the mayor will be at the depot, even if you won't be."

Lincoln frowned. "I should have stayed with the rest of the party."

"It was at my advice, sir," said Scott, "that you took the night cars. I trust our people in Baltimore. They swore to me that you would never have got through alive."

"Well, even if you were right, General, I'm still not sure that you've done me a good turn."

"We could take no chances," said Seward.

General Scott nodded. "That's why I agreed with Mr. Seward when he said you would be safer at Willard's Hotel than in a private house."

"Was that *your* idea?" Lincoln looked at Seward, with some amusement. "I thought it was General Scott's."

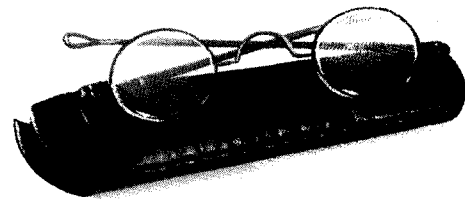
Seward was amazed to find himself blushing, as he stammered about safety. Actually, the Albany Plan had dictated Lincoln's removal from a private house to a hotel where Seward and the others would have access to him and his party. The General saluted as they departed.

The weak sun had now vanished behind what looked to be snow clouds. Lincoln and Seward walked in silence down Seventeenth Street to the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue, as usual crowded at this time of day. Carriages and cabs clattered by while the horse carriages rattled on their tracks, bells sounding.

"No soldiers," said Lincoln, watching the traffic.

"No war—so far."

"What a fix we're in," said the President-elect, stepping up on the brick sidewalk that led past the iron fence of the White House where he would soon be quartered—caged was more like it, thought Seward. For a brief moment—very brief, actually—he was glad that Lincoln and not he had been elected sixteenth President of what was left of the United States of America.



THE SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF WILLARD'S HOTEL seemed to hum and throb, and John Hay felt as if he were still on the cars as he made his way through the crowd of people—mostly colored, he noticed—who were on hand to get a look at Mr. Lincoln, who was not visible; unlike Mrs. Lincoln, who was, as well as the three Lincoln sons, the six lady relations of Mrs. Lincoln's, and the two Lincoln secretaries, John George Nicolay (born twenty-nine years ago in Bavaria; moved to Illinois as a child; grew up to edit a Pittsfield newspaper), and John Hay himself, aged twenty-two, a graduate of Brown who had been admitted to the Illinois bar exactly two weeks ago; thanks, in part, to the fact that his uncle was Springfield's leading lawyer and an old associate of Lincoln's, and thanks, again in part, to the fact, that Hay had gone to school with Nicolay, Lincoln's secretary during the campaign for the presidency. Hay had been able to make himself so useful to Nicolay in the campaign that Nico had said to the President-elect, "Can't we take Johnny to Washington with us?" and al-

though Lincoln had groaned and said, "We can't take all Illinois down with us to Washington," John Hay had been duly employed as a presidential secretary. Small, wiry, handsome, John Hay intended to enjoy as much as possible his sudden elevation in the world.

At Brown, Hay had wanted to be a poet; in fact, he was a poet who wrote verse that got published. But that was not exactly a career or a living. For a time, the pulpit had appealed to him—except for the business about God. Although the law had no great appeal to him, for a young man named Hay there was not much choice. He worked in his uncle's office, where he got to know his uncle's friend, Mr. Lincoln, a man whose ups and downs were much talked of in Springfield, particularly the downs. Mr. Lincoln was supposed to have gone mad for two weeks just before what was to have been his wedding day, which had to be postponed. He had gone into a decline after losing his seat in Congress, and despite the campaigning that he had done for the new Whig President, Zachary Taylor, he was offered no government appointment other than the secretaryship of the Oregon Territory, which Mrs. Lincoln had turned down for him. Home in Springfield, Lincoln practiced law with the brilliant, hard-drinking William Herndon and let himself, many said, sink into apathy, while making a good deal of money as a railroad lawyer. When the great debate on slavery began, Mr. Lincoln found his voice, and after his challenge to Stephen Douglas, he had come to personify the new Republican Party and the new politics—whatever they were. Hay was never quite certain just where Mr. Lincoln meant to take the nation, but he did know that wherever that was, he was going to go, too.

At the center of the lobby, the manager of Willard's was greeting Mrs. Lincoln, who was tired and not, Hay could see, in the best of moods. Nicolay and Hay had their code words for the great folk. Mary Todd Lincoln was known, depending on her mood, as either Madam or the Hellcat. Mr. Lincoln was either the Ancient or, in honor of the previous year's visit to Washington by the first ambassadors from that awesome Japanese official known as the Tycoon, the Tycoon.

The slender Nicolay was at the Hellcat's side, smiling grimly through his long, pointed, youthful beard. Although Hay could not hear what the Hellcat was saying, he suspected that a complaint was being registered. Suddenly, Hay found himself next to the oldest Lincoln son, Robert, a seventeen-year-old Harvard freshman who said, with pleasure, "Johnny!" as if they had not spent the past twelve days and nights cooped up together on the cars from Springfield, playing cards in the baggage car and, occasionally, taking a swig from a bottle that Lamont always carried—"just in case," he'd say, shoving it into the great side pocket that contained a slingshot, a pair of brass knuckles, a hunting knife, and a derringier.

"I think Nicolay needs some help," said Hay, maneuvering himself through the crowd to Mrs. Lincoln's side just as her normal high color was beginning to take on that dusky glow that was the first sign of a Hellcat storm.

"Mrs. Lincoln!" Hay beamed, boyishly; but then with his youthful face he had no other way of looking, to his chagrin. Strange men often addressed him as Sonny; his cheek was often patted; he knew that he must, very soon, grow a moustache, if he could. "Your trunks are already in your rooms." This was a lie. But he knew Mrs. Lincoln's passionate attachment to her baggage and its integrity.

"Oh, Johnny! You do relieve my mind!" Mary Todd Lincoln's smile was, suddenly, winning and so, Hay was won; she took his arm and they swept through the hotel lobby to the main staircase, as the manager and his outriders cleared a path for their considerable party.

Outside, the crowd dispersed. David and Annie were disappointed not to have seen the archfiend himself. "They say he's got whiskers now, so as no one will know him," said David, as they walked up Thirteenth Street.

"But once people get used to the whiskers, they'll know him after a while." Annie stopped in front of a raw wood picket fence. Through the gap between two slats they could see a vacant lot where a number of young men were drilling with old rifles.

"Who are they?" asked David.

"The National Volunteers," Annie whispered, her breath white between them. "One of them is a friend of Brother Isaac's."

"What are they drilling for?"

"Inauguration Day. Come on. Let's go. I don't want them to see me."

David and Annie hurried down the street. "They're crazy," he said, "to take on the whole U.S. Army."

In Parlor Suite Six at Willard's Hotel, it was agreed that the National Volunteers were indeed crazy but potentially dangerous: such was the intelligence already received by the suite's principal resident, the bewhiskered Abraham Lincoln, who now sat in a huge armchair in the parlor as his two younger sons, Willie and Tad, climbed over him, and Hay smiled sweetly at this domestic scene. He had never hated two children more than these. Tad, at seven, could not be understood due to some sort of malformation of his palate, while the ruthlessly eloquent and intelligent Willie, at ten, could be understood all too well. Willie was a tenacious explainer, who regarded Johnny Hay as a somewhat dull-witted playmate.

While the children shouted and pummeled their father, Seward and Lamont discussed with Lincoln, as best they could, arrangements for his security. Mary had withdrawn to the bedroom to greet her—Hay prayed—not-mythical luggage.

Nicolay was at the door to the parlor, looking somewhat alarmed. Then Hay saw why. Behind Nicolay towered the unmistakable figure of Charles Sumner, senator from Massachusetts, heir to Daniel Webster, greatest of the Senate's scholars, an orator of such power that audiences had been known, after three hours of his burning-bush language, to beg for more of that incandescent flame, fueled by a single passion—the conviction that there was no greater task

on earth than to liberate the slaves, and punish their masters.

Lincoln positively jackknifed to his feet at the sight of Sumner, scattering his sons upon the flowered carpet. As the boys started to yell with indignation, Lincoln said, "John, you deliver the boys to their mother."

Hay grabbed Tad's hand and pulled him, squeaking, to his feet, while Willie ran into his mother's bedroom, shouting, "Mamma!"

Gracefully, Seward introduced Senator Sumner to the President-elect. Charles Sumner was not only remarkably handsome but, unlike most modern statesmen, he was clean-shaven. Hay had already sent out a curiously uninteresting story on the wire service to the effect that Lincoln would be the first bearded President in American history. Face-hair was now respectable, or *de rigueur*, as Hay's French-speaking Providence, Rhode Island, muse, Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, would say. Since a brief engagement to Edgar Allan Poe, Mrs. Whitman had worn only white, like a shroud; she had also sprinkled herself with ether in order to suggest a terminal illness of the sort that had once ravished Poe; and entirely overwhelmed poetry-loving Brown undergraduates.

"I would've known you anywhere," said Lincoln. "From your pictures."

"I might *not* have known you, sir, with the beard of Abraham, you might say, so newly acquired." To Hay's ear Sumner sounded like so many of his fellow Boston Brahmins, more English than American. Even so, the voice was singularly beautiful in its way, thought Hay, the Westerner, as he slipped into the bedroom where, to his delight, he found Madam and a colored maid opening a row of trunks. As Willie entered the adjoining bedroom, she said, "Take Tad with you."

"No," said Tad.

"Yes!" said the Hellcat with a sudden change of expression that everyone, including the remarkably spoiled Tad, understood and feared. Whimpering with self-pity, the child obeyed. "Oh, God, will this never end?" Madam appealed to Hay. "I feel seasick from the cars. I hate these trunks."

"Well, you'll soon be settled in the White House. Can I help?"

Madam was holding up a dress of blue velvet; she examined it carefully for signs of damage. "I am a martyr to moths," she said to herself, but spoke aloud, a curious habit to which Hay had got used during their days of confinement aboard the cars. When Mrs. Lincoln wanted to—or was able to (he could never tell whether her erratic behavior was calculated or simply uncontrolled)—she could charm anyone on earth, as she must have charmed the most ambitious young lawyer in Springfield. Not that Lincoln would have needed much charming, for she was a Todd and lived with her sister, whose house on the hill was the center of the town's social life, and it was there that she had been courted by all the other ambitious lawyers, not to mention Judge Stephen Douglas; as a child in Lexington, Kentucky, she

had known Henry Clay, the only American statesman, except for Parson Weems's Washington, that Lincoln had ever openly praised.

Madam gave the dress to the maid to hang up; turned to Hay with a sudden, almost girlish smile. "Between you and me, Mr. Hay, there is more to jest about in all of this than I might have suspected, for all the weariness as well."

"I've noticed that, too, Mrs. Lincoln."

But then the smile was gone. She had heard the sonorous voice in the next room. "Who is that with Mr. Lincoln?"

"Senator Sumner."

"Oh." Hay could see that she was torn between timidity and curiosity, which she resolved by going to the half-open door and looking into the parlor. "He's every bit as handsome as they say," she said in a low voice; this time to Hay and not to herself.

"He hasn't stopped talking since he arrived."

"At least he seems to have driven away Mr. Seward, that abolitionist sneak." Mary turned back into the room.

"Surely, Mr. Seward's no sneak—"

"Well, he was a rabid abolitionist once upon a time. Now, of course, he's gone and changed a few of his spots, but right or wrong, Mr. Sumner never changes. I do hope all these abolitionists never forget that Mr. Lincoln is *not* in favor of abolishing slavery. He simply does not want to extend it to the new territories. That is all; all!" In the past twelve days Hay had heard her say this so many times that he had ceased to hear the words. But then Mrs. Lincoln was in a difficult position. The Todds were a great slaveholding Kentucky family; worse, they were, many of them, secessionists, a source of much embarrassment to her, not to mention to the new President. "Find me Mrs. Ann Spriggs." This was unexpected.

"Who is that, Mrs. Lincoln?"

"She is a widow who has—or had—a boardinghouse on Capitol Hill. That's where we lived when Mr. Lincoln was in Congress. She's still alive, they say, and I'd dearly love to see her again and"—the girlish smile returned—"and show off!"

"For that," said Hay, again charmed by Madam, who had just taken over from the Hellcat, "I'll find her, Mrs. Lincoln."

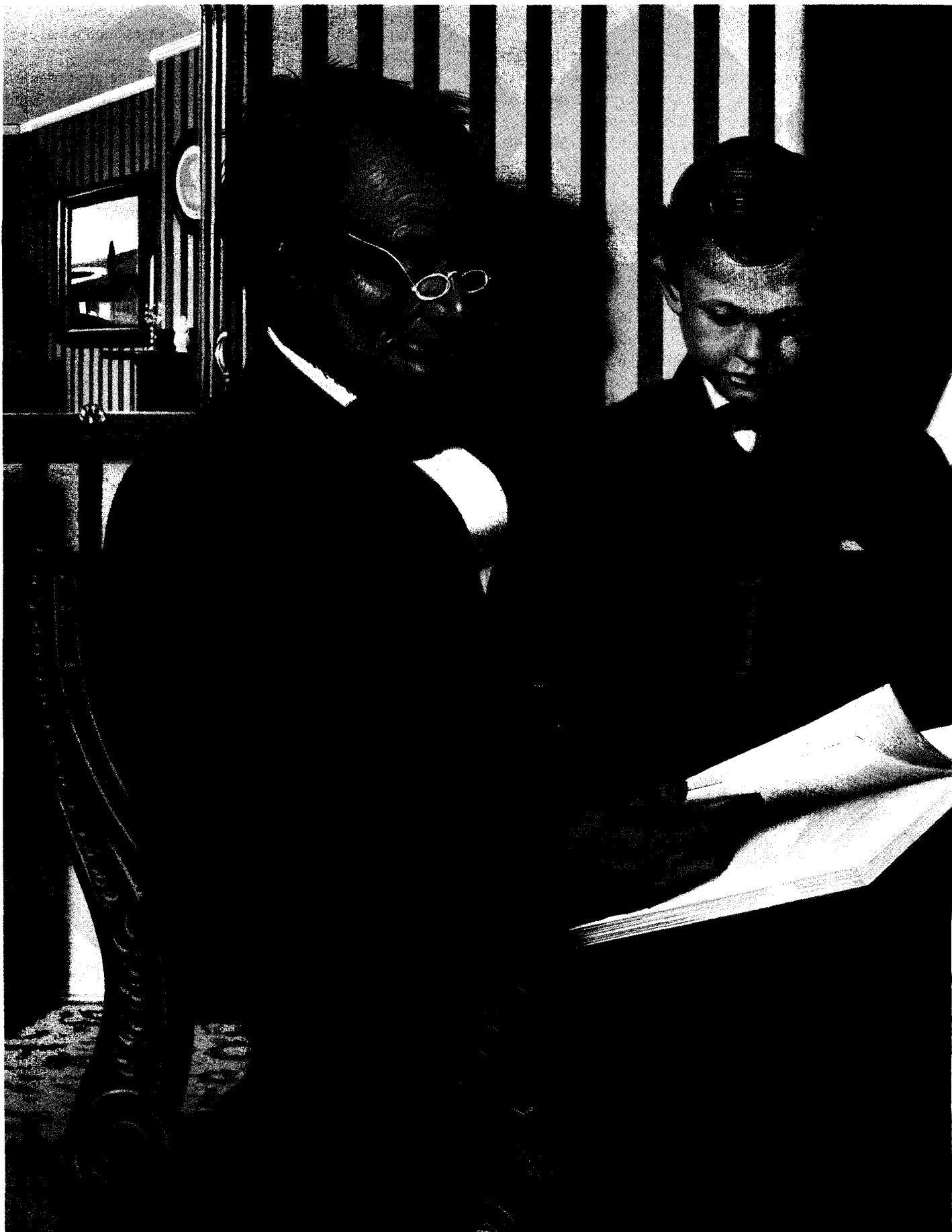
With a wave, Madam dismissed him. She is going to be a very royal First Lady, he thought, as he returned to the parlor, hoping to escape the senatorial presence unremarked. But Hay's appearance stopped Sumner in mid-sentence. "Sir?"

"This is my secretary's secretary, Mr. Sumner. John Hay."

"Oh, yes." They shook hands. Hay felt a certain awe, seeing so famous a man up close. "I heard you speak, sir," he said. "Two years ago. In Providence. I was at Brown."

"I remember the speech." Sumner had lost interest. Hay looked at Lincoln: should he stay? The Tycoon raised his chin, which meant no. "I'm curious to see which is taller, Mr. Sumner or myself, but when I suggested that we measure backs . . ."

"I said"—Sumner was not about to allow anyone to say





his lines for him—"the time has come to unite our fronts and not our backs before the enemies of our country."

"Yes, that's *just* what you said." Lincoln turned to Hay. "Word for word," he added. With a low bow, Hay left the two statesmen to what, he suspected, was going to be a most disagreeable session. Sumner had supported Lincoln in the election; but now Sumner feared Seward's ascendancy over the new President. Sumner wanted Lincoln to abolish slavery in the seceded states. But Lincoln was not about to do that, not with Virginia and Maryland on the verge of secession, and half a dozen border states, including Kentucky, ready to follow. On the train from Springfield, as Hay observed the large crowds that cheered the President-elect (everywhere except in New York City, where there was a powerful pro-secessionist movement), he came to think of Lincoln as a beleaguered fortress, with cannons firing at him from every direction; a fortress waiting to be relieved by. . . But Hay did not know by what. No one knew what was in Lincoln's mind. Particularly not the boisterous young men crowded at the far end of Willard's bar, drinking cocktails at ten cents a glass.

Hay pushed through the swinging doors of the long bar just off the main parlor of the hotel, where ladies sat beneath a gilded dome, drinking tea and casting disapproving—when not envious—looks at the men as they entered and left the bibulous good fellowship of the smoky, long bar.

Hay found the smooth-faced Robert Lincoln—the boy could but would not grow whiskers—talking to a short, bright-eyed young man who was already beginning to go bald. Robert introduced Hay to the young man, saying, "He graduated from Harvard the same year you graduated from Brown."

"Well, that's a bond, I guess," said Hay, ordering a brandy smash.

The Harvard graduate was examining Hay curiously. "You're one of Mr. Lincoln's secretaries, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Everyone says Johnny's too young." Robert smiled shyly; but then he was shy; and a bit solemn. Two years earlier he had been uprooted by his father and sent east to enroll at Harvard. But since he had not been scholastically ready for that great university he had been obliged to spend a year in preparation at the Phillips Exeter Academy, in New Hampshire. It was said that Mr. Lincoln wanted the best possible education for his oldest son just as he himself had had the very worst, which is to say practically none at all. After the debate with Douglas and the lost election, Lincoln decided to travel east to see how his son was getting on at Exeter. It was on this trip—coincidentally, hardly any claimed—that Mr. Lincoln was prevailed upon to speak third in a series at New York's Cooper Institute. He did so on February 27, 1860. The liberal editor of the New York *Evening Post*, William Cullen Bryant, chaired the meeting while the city's most powerful editor, Horace Greeley, sat in the audience.

The next day Lincoln was known to the entire nation. With characteristic eloquence, he had accepted slavery in

the South, but he had opposed its extension elsewhere. This pleased a majority of the Republicans while arousing great suspicion among Douglas's Northern Democrats, not to mention the Democrats of the South. After Lincoln's triumph at the Cooper Institute, he spoke elsewhere in the Northeast, and in the course of this triumphal passage he took the Republican nomination away from the powerful Seward as well as from that passionate anti-slavery man Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio. "So if it hadn't been for you, Bob," Lincoln liked to say, "being up there at Exeter, I'd never have been nominated or elected." Robert appeared to believe this. Hay did not. From the beginning of his close association with Lincoln—less than a year, but it seemed like a lifetime—he had been delightedly conscious of the Tycoon's endless cunning. There was nothing that Lincoln ever left to chance if he could help it. He was a master of guiding public opinion either directly, through a set speech to a living audience, or indirectly, through an uncanny sense of how to use the press to his own ends. He was also the first politician to understand the importance and the influence of photography; no photographer was ever sent away unsatisfied. He had even grown a beard in order to soften his somewhat harsh features; and to make himself, at least in appearance, the nation's true Father Abraham. It was thus with characteristic forethought that he had sent his son to New England to school so that with no other apparent end than ordinary paternal care, he might, when the time came, go east—and seize the crown.

The bald young man, who was Henry, the son of Charles Francis Adams, of Massachusetts, a Lincoln supporter, turned to Hay and said, "I saw our senator on his way upstairs. I assumed he was on his way to Mr. Lincoln."

Hay nodded. "I left them together. I think Mr. Sumner was about to make a speech."

Henry sighed. "He is like a madman nowadays . . ."

"Well, he was knocked on the head with a stick, wasn't he? By that crazy Southerner?" Robert started to order another drink, but Hay made a warning gesture; and Robert desisted. There were times when Hay had the sense that he had been hired not as a secretary to the President but as an elder brother to the boys.

"Oh, Mr. Sumner's recovered. Pretty much, anyway. But he seems to have conversed with God altogether too much during those three years that he was an invalid. When he came back to the Senate, he announced, 'I am in morals, not politics.'"

"That *is* chilling," said Hay.

"Much my own view," said Henry; and smiled for the first time. "I should think that the two are probably antithetical. My father disagrees, of course. I'm *his* secretary, by the way. He's in the Congress, you know."

"I know. I know. Mr. Lincoln thinks very highly of Mr. Adams."

"That's right," said Robert. "Fact, he said maybe he was going to—"

"Robert!" Hay spoke warningly.

"All right, Johnny."

"Mr. Robert Lincoln . . ." Hay began.

"The Prince of Rails, as the press calls him. Oh, they'll enjoy *that* at Harvard," said Henry, whose smile, at best, was thin indeed.

"I'll never hear the end of it." Robert was glum. "At least they couldn't get me to make a speech on the back of the train. I don't know how Father does it."

Henry turned to Robert. "I know my father's being considered for minister to England. Personally, I'd rather he stayed here."

"And miss out on London?" Hay betrayed his own youthful interest. For Hay, London was literature—Dickens, Thackeray, and whoever wrote *Adam Bede*, and history. Washington was just old-shoe politics.

"I'd rather miss out on London than on Lincoln," said Henry.

"Why?" Hay was truly curious.

"Well, if he should fail, there will no longer be a country. And since my family believes that we invented the whole thing, I'd certainly like to see what becomes of the remains."

"I don't think he'll fail," said Hay, who thought that he would; as much as he prayed that somehow Lincoln might yet hold together what was now falling apart with such awful speed.

"In that case, if he succeeds, it will be even more interesting."

"How? It will be just as it was before."

"No, it won't. It can't be."

"What *will* it be?"

"No one knows. That's the excitement."

AT EXACTLY NINE O'CLOCK THAT SAME EVENING, Salmon P. Chase, late governor of Ohio and senator-elect, stood outside Parlor Suite Six with the delegation from the Peace Conference. Chase had not seen Lincoln since shortly after the election, when the President-elect had summoned him to Springfield. Lincoln then beat a number of times about the bush before he offered Chase—or, perhaps did *not* offer Chase—a post in the Cabinet.

They were walking down the street that passed in front of Lincoln's comfortable mansion—so unlike, thought Chase sourly, the legendary log cabin of Lincoln's birth, which had been advertised from one end of the Union to the other. Lincoln was courteous but tentative; and Chase, who had never thought him strong, came away convinced that the President-to-be was dangerously weak. "I look for a balanced Cabinet, naturally," he said, automatically raising his tall hat to a passing lady. It was then that Chase noticed that Lincoln kept an elaborate file of papers *inside* the hat. At least the man was every bit as common as he presented himself; the mediocrity was honest. On the other hand, Chase was less certain about Lincoln's views. Essentially, he thought him an opportunist. Yet it was Lincoln who had prevailed at the convention and it was the gover-

nor of Ohio who was meekly following the tall man down the street. "Mr. Seward, who got the second most votes at the convention, is plainly the party's own choice for secretary of state."

"Has he accepted?"

"Yes." Lincoln did not elaborate. "You, sir, got the third most votes."

Chase stopped breathing with excitement: the offer of the Treasury was near at hand. But Lincoln veered off. "Then there was Bates, of Missouri, and Cameron, of Pennsylvania."

"Sir, Mr. Simon Cameron is corrupt."

"I have been told that." Lincoln sounded grim.

"Of course, he controls Pennsylvania." Chase had needed Lincoln.

"But *I* am Honest Abe," Lincoln replied, with what Chase took to be a weak smile. Then he changed the subject. "I want a Southerner in the Cabinet. A real Southerner. Preferably a Virginian. Seward is canvassing for me now."

"Any luck?"

Lincoln stopped then. He looked down at Chase—a stout, clean-shaven man with a nearly bald Roman bust of a head. "Sir, let me make you a curious proposal. I would like you to be Secretary of the Treasury, but I cannot offer you the post just yet."

Chase contained his indignation. He had had, thus far, a splendid career, and had he been more expedient and less moral, he, not Lincoln, would have been the Republican candidate. But if you cannot get cream, settle for milk, had always been his practical wisdom. But now Lincoln was suggesting that even the despised saucer of milk might not come his way. Since Chase did not betray his chagrin, the two men had parted on friendly terms. Fortunately, the complaisant Ohio legislature was more than willing to appoint Salmon P. Chase to the United States Senate, so at least he would hold some office in this disintegrating republic.

Now Chase stood at Lincoln's door as the delegates from the Peace Conference fell into place behind him. The Southerners were particularly keen to see the demon. As the clock in the lobby below struck nine, Nicolay opened the door, bowed to Chase, and motioned for the delegation to file into the parlor where Lincoln, quite alone, stood in front of the fireplace.

"Mr. Chase!" Lincoln's handclasp was warmer than his voice, thought Chase, unable to interpret the auguries in question. He had already heard that Cameron was to have not the Treasury but the War Department; and Lincoln was supposed to be having second thoughts about that. The Treasury—after the presidency—was what Chase most wanted. Bates, of Missouri, was not suitable; and no Southerner would serve. The Maryland Blairs, mad father and two mad sons, were also at work trying to capture Lincoln, but though Chase was convinced that Lincoln was weak, he was equally convinced that he was extremely wily. Chase had not yet heard any particulars of the Albany Plan.

If he had, he would have been in despair. Chase truly feared Seward and his mentor Thurlow Weed.

Chase handed Lincoln a letter from the head of the Peace Conference, former President Tyler. "He sends his compliments, sir. He hopes to call on you at another time."

"I shall call on *him*, of course." Lincoln's courtesy was perfunctory. He turned to the semicircle of delegates, who stared at him as if he were some sort of rare beast. "Gentlemen, I know some of you personally from the past. I know all of you by name and repute. I am glad that this conference continues, and I will do what I can to give assurance and reassurance to the Southern states that we mean them no harm. It is true that I was elected to prevent the extension of slavery to the new territories of the Union. But what is now the status quo in the Southern states is beyond my power—or desire—ever to alter."

Although it had been plain to Chase that Lincoln was not the man to lead any sort of crusade against slavery, Lincoln aided by a powerful Cabinet . . . As Seward dreamed that he would be Lincoln's prime minister, Chase saw himself as chancellor, on the order, say, of the Austrian Metternich.

A Southern congressman challenged Lincoln. "Will *you* uphold the laws, where previous Presidents did not? Will you suppress the likes of Mr. John Brown and the Reverend Garrison who preach war against us and our property?"

"Well, we hanged Mr. Brown, and we put Garrison in prison." Lincoln was mild. "That strikes me as a reasonable amount of suppression."

"But the laws of property . . ." the voice continued.

Chase shut his eyes; he could not wait for his daughter Kate to arrive tomorrow evening. Thrice a widower at fifty-three, Salmon P. Chase's whole life was now his twenty-year-old daughter; a thirteen-year-old daughter, Nettie, had not yet had the time to lay any great claim to his powerful paternal affections. But the beautiful and gifted Kate had acted as his hostess when he was governor of Ohio, and she would do the same in Washington. To please Kate, he had just rented a large, expensive town house even though he was, as always, in debt. Like his friend Sumner, Chase dealt not in politics but in morals. But morals paid poorly. Chase could not remember a time when he had not been as anxious about money as he had been serene about moral issues.

Lincoln's voice suddenly recalled Chase from his reverie. The President-elect was answering one of the Southerners. "Look, there is only one difference between us. You think slavery is right and ought to be extended. We think it is wrong and ought to be restricted. For this, neither has any just cause to be angry with the other."

If that was not sufficient honey for the bearish South, what was? wondered Chase.

"Then explain, sir," ordered another Southern voice, "why it is that since your election, six states—"

"Seven!" from a dozen voices.

"—seven states, counting Texas, officially, today, have left the Union."

"That's more for them to explain to me than for me to

explain to them." Lincoln was surprisingly cool under the circumstances. But then he was supposed to be a practiced lawyer. Curious, thought Chase, how little anyone really knew about this new President.

"But I should like to remind you that *before* my election to the presidency, the governor of South Carolina announced that that state would secede if I were elected. And so they did. And others have followed, as you remind me. Currently, those elements in rebellion against the federal government"—Chase liked the use of the word "elements" instead of "states"; the distinction was sufficiently nice to make it possible for second thoughts all round, not that there would be any—"have seized, *stolen*, to use the precise word . . ." Lincoln looked in Chase's direction. For an eerie instant, Chase wondered if his mind was being looked into and read. But the look was casual. Whenever Lincoln spoke, he was always careful to look at every part of his audience. First the dreamy gray eyes would glance to one side; and then, as if he had discovered someone of interest to him, the whole head would slowly turn and follow his gaze. ". . . stolen, I repeat, three revenue cutters, four customs houses, three mints, six arsenals and their contents, and one entire naval yard. All of these are property of the whole people of the United States and not of any single element of the population."

Voices were raised. Would the federal government consider selling the "stolen" property? Lincoln thought it a better idea to return what had been stolen; and to forget the whole thing. He is leaving them every possible escape route, thought Chase, who inclined to the divine view that evil must be punished. An eye for an eye was his religion.

When asked about Fort Sumter, at the entrance of Charleston Harbor, Lincoln commended the courage of its commander, Major Anderson. No, he had prepared no instructions for the Major because "I have not yet taken the oath of office. I will say how . . . impressed I was last month, as was everyone, when General Scott sent a merchant steamer with reinforcements for Fort Sumter, and the governor of South Carolina was able to turn back that ship."

Would Lincoln try to reinforce Fort Sumter? He would not answer. Meanwhile, he took seriously Virginia's effort to make peace between the regions of the country. He was in communication with the pro-Union elements in both Virginia and Maryland, whose governor was a Union man. No, he had not read the speech that Jefferson Davis had delivered when he became President of the Confederate States of America, five days ago. "But I just read a newspaper account of my old friend and colleague in Congress, Mr. Alexander Stephens, of Georgia."

"You mean *Vice-President* Stephens?" asked a challenging voice.

Lincoln affected not to hear. "Mr. Stephens admitted that Thomas Jefferson, a founder of the Union, thought that the principle of slavery was wrong. But Mr. Stephens said that the elements that he adheres to have come to the conclusion that the exact opposite is true, that the correct

principle is that since the black man is inferior to the white man, he must be the white man's slave. I mean no disrespect to my old friend when I say that between his brand-new and to me highly peculiar principle and the old-fashioned principle of Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, I must support my predecessor in the office of President of the *United States*."

Which way will he go? wondered Chase, as the delegates filed past the tall man, who had a word of a personal nature for each. To Chase, he said, "I look forward to a continuation of our Springfield conversation."

Several imprudent answers occurred, as always, to Chase, and, as always, were replaced with that habitual prudence for which he was never entirely not admired. "So do I, sir. The Virginians—" Chase lowered his voice, as several were nearby, and Lincoln lowered his head, the better to hear him. Chase noticed that Lincoln's thick, coarse hair was as black as an Indian's, with no sign of gray. "They will stay in the Union if you let Fort Sumter alone."

"One state for one fort?" Lincoln smiled. "I think that's a pretty good deal for the fort owner."

"Yes, sir." Chase moved on. He had got the answer that he had feared; but expected. Lincoln would give in to the South, after a certain amount of calculated bluster.

Mary was awake in bed when Lincoln joined her. The last of the peace delegation had gone, as he put it to her, "in a state of belligerency."

"Come to bed. You look so tired."

"*You* must be tired, Molly." Lincoln began to undress.

"I thought I was. Then I got into bed, and tried to sleep, and couldn't. Too tired to sleep. Too excited, I guess."

Lincoln turned off the gaslight overhead. The lamp beside the four-poster bed cast a blue-and-white glare across Mary's face.

"What did you think of the Old Club House?" asked Lincoln, pulling on a nightshirt that was too short for him; but then all store-bought nightshirts were too short for him. Mary wanted to have some made to order; or she herself would make them to order. But Lincoln was perfectly content to wander about with long legs bare—just like a stork, she'd say, in disapproval.

"The Old Club House? Oh, Governor Seward's Old Club House. An appropriate name."

"Well. It *was* a real clubhouse till recently." Lincoln stared at his beard in the glass; idly, he parted it.

"I know. That's where they brought poor Mr. Key to die, after he was shot. I could never trust that man. Never!"

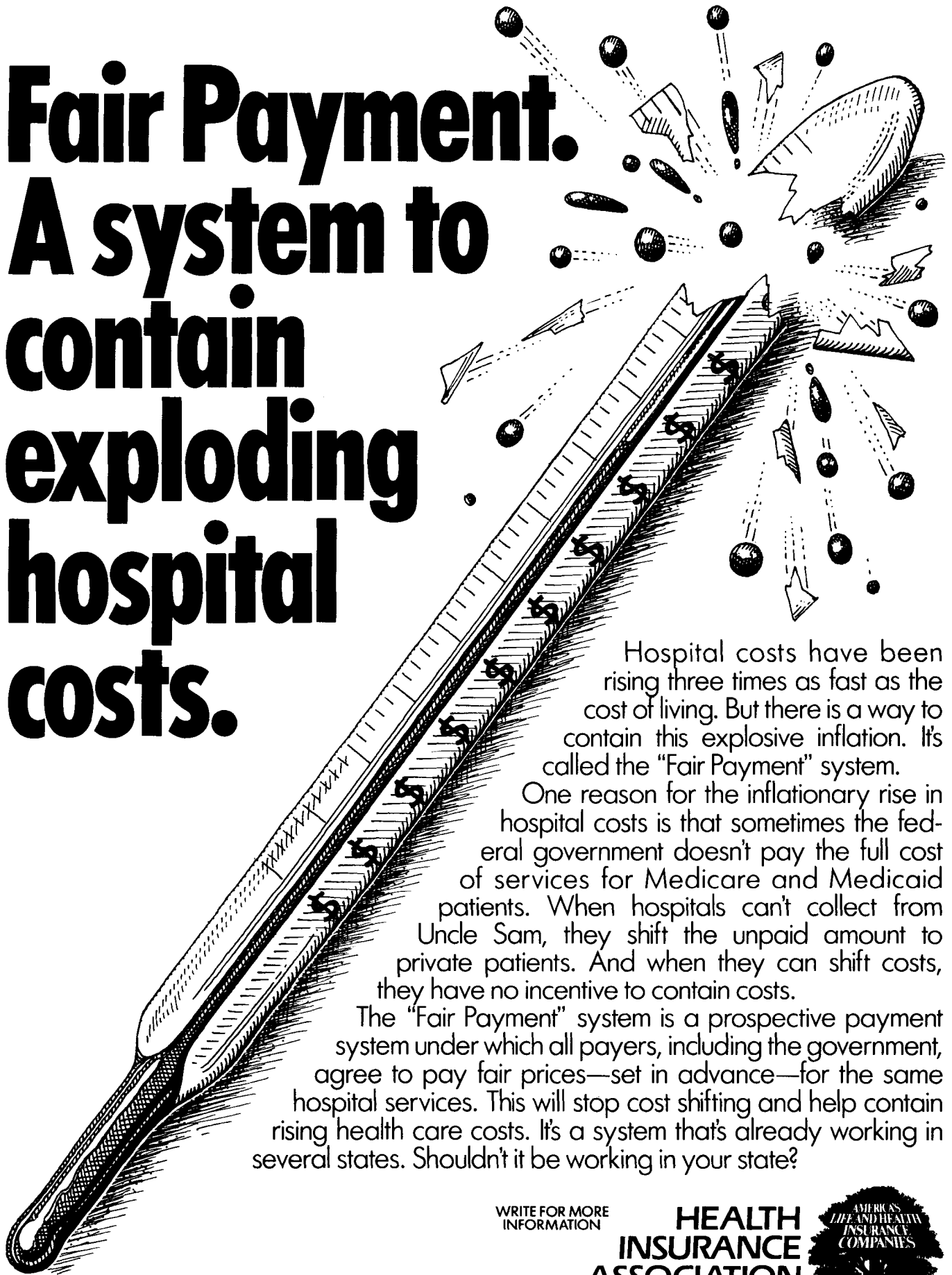
"The late Mr. Key? Or his murderer, Mr. Sickles?" Lincoln removed the part from his beard.

"Governor Seward, Father. You know what I think of him."

"Well, I noticed you did quite well by his dinner."

"Oh, the food was splendid! I do have a sufficiency of flesh, don't I?" Sadly, Mary squeezed her right upper arm and watched, with sorrow, as the resulting bulge stretched taut the white lace of her nightdress.

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"Well, you look in your sufficiency sufficiently beautiful to me."

"Oh, Father, you'd say that if I looked like . . . like General Scott."

"Of course, I would *say* that. But I would not mean it." Lincoln stepped into the adjoining bathroom where the commode was. Mary had remarked on the hotel's comfort and modernity. No chamber pot was necessary in any of the parlor suites. Would the White House be the same?

"Father," she called, "do I nag you about appointments?"

"Yes," came the voice from the bathroom.

"Oh, I don't! It's the vampire press that says I do because I'm Southern and supposed to believe in slavery when I'm the only abolitionist in the family and you are just—mild and meek."

Lincoln returned, drying his face with a towel decorated with the W of Willard's. "I suppose any man named Watson or Wilcox would feel justified in stealing one of these towels," he said.

"Or Washington. Did you give Governor Seward your speech to read?"

Lincoln nodded. "He said he'd make notes."

"Don't listen to him."

"I *listen* to everyone. I like him, all in all."

"He thinks he's so clever."

"Well, he has every right to think that. He *is* clever. Though not clever enough to get rid of Simon Cameron for me."

"I thought you'd decided to keep Cameron out of the Cabinet."

"I did. Then I was un-decided. Anyway, I kept him out of the Treasury." Lincoln got under the covers. "He'll be at the War Department."

"Then I suggest you avoid fighting a war."

"I mean to, Molly."

"Who'll be at the Treasury?"

"Salmon P. Chase."

"That crazed abolitionist! He wants to be President."

"They all do. That's why I'm putting the whole lot where I can see them. In the Cabinet." Lincoln sighed.

"I suppose you're right, Father. You usually are. Eventually, anyway. Oh, Cousin Lizzie is going to stay on for the first few weeks we're in the President's House. She's wonderful with upholsterers and all that sort of thing. They say the mansion has been let go to rack and ruin. Just like this country, I said, which I hope the vampire press does *not* pick up, true though it is. Mr. Buchanan has been a disaster, and thank God it's you who'll take his place and not Judge Douglas, brilliant as he is. Strange how I might have married him! You know, everyone thought I should. Even I thought I *should*, but then I met you at the dance at our house, and you came up to me and you said, by way of introduction, that you wanted to dance with me, 'in the worst way,' you said, your very words, and so you did dance with me, and I told everyone, it was truly in the worst way! Oh, Father!" Mary smiled at the memory, and turned to her husband, only to find him sound asleep on his back. From

force of habit she touched his brow—she touched the brows of all those close to her, to detect signs of the fever that had killed her three-year-old Eddie; but Lincoln's face was cool to the touch. Suddenly, he took a deep breath and then, as he exhaled, he moaned.

"Poor man," she said to her sleeping husband; and wondered if his dreams were now as terrifying as hers had been, unknown to him, for so many years.

THE NEXT MORNING, GRIPSACK IN HAND, GOVERNOR Seward arrived at Willard's Hotel, fought his way through the crowded lobby and up crowded stairs and then down the crowded corridor to Parlor Suite Six, where Lamon admitted him to a room crowded with two small boys playing tag while Lincoln sat beside the window, glasses on his nose, reading the newspapers.

"I see your admirers are filling up the hotel." Seward gave Lincoln the gripsack.

"I had never realized how many men are eager to serve their country in high-paid positions that are within my gift." Lincoln took the gripsack, plainly relieved to have it once more in his hand.

"How do you deal with them?"

"My two secretaries, poor boys, are interviewing the lot. Everyone who wants an appointment from me goes to them in Parlor One and leaves his credentials. Speaking of credentials, what do you think of mine?" Lincoln tapped the gripsack. Willie tapped Tad on the head. Tad screamed. Lincoln turned to Lamon. "Take the boys to their mother." Despite loud cries of defiance, the huge Lamon carried both boys from the room.

"Well, sir, it is a finely argued case." Seward took his time lighting a cigar. He was still not certain that he understood either the speech or its author.

"It is no more than a legal case?" Lincoln showed an author's dejection, which amused Seward.

"Of course it is more. You have made the point, once and for all, that you were not elected President in order to abolish slavery in the South . . ."

"I cannot say that enough, can I? But the more I do say it, the more violent the Southerners become."

"They think, in time, we intend to do away with slavery, and so they mean to do away with us first—by leaving the Union."

"Which they cannot do. I am clear on that, am I not?"

Seward nodded; and removed from his tailcoat pocket the notes he had made on the inaugural address. "I take this passage to be the centerpiece of your . . . brief." Seward smiled; Lincoln did not. Seward read, "I hold, that in contemplation of universal law, and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper, ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination."

"Yes, that is at the heart of my 'brief.'"

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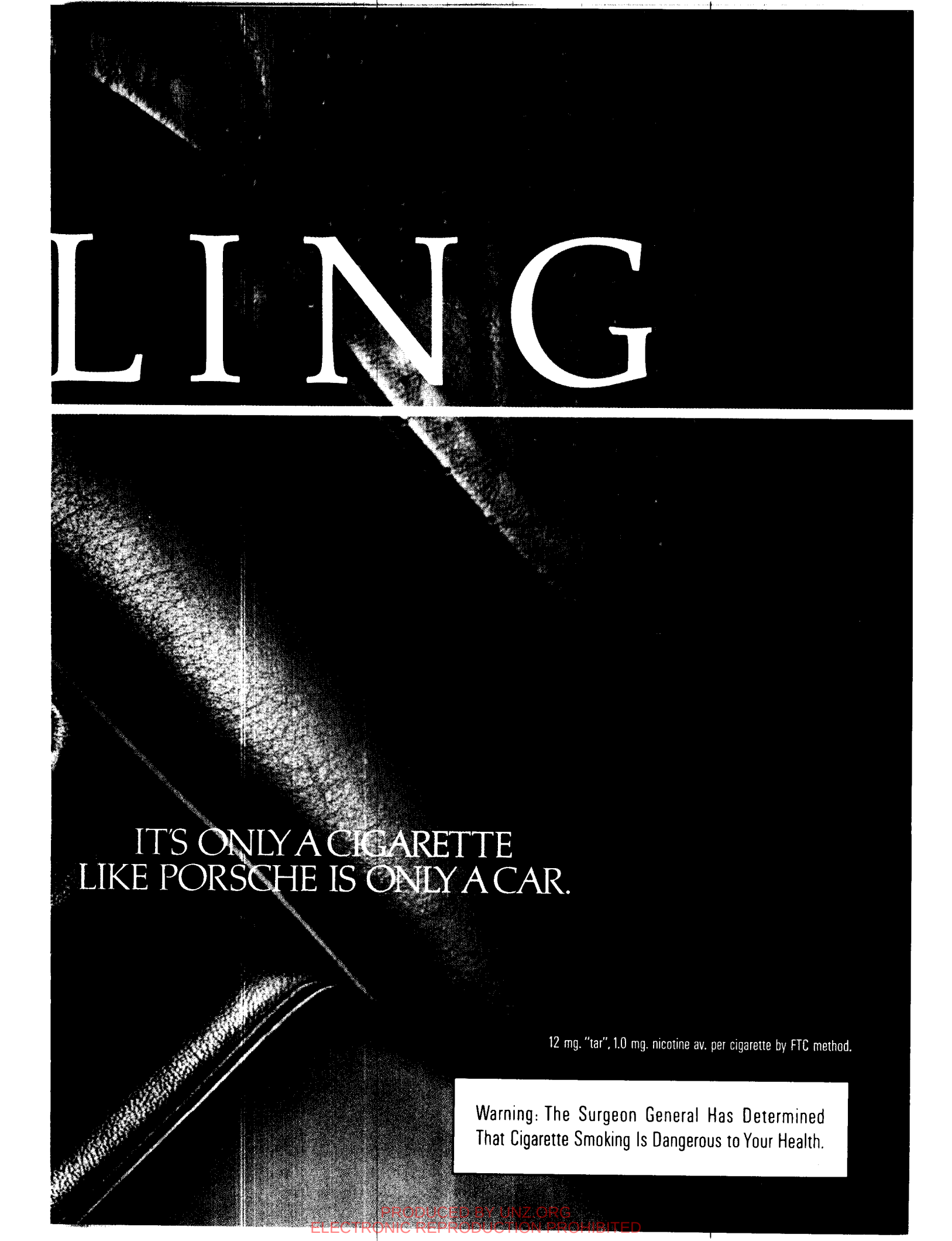


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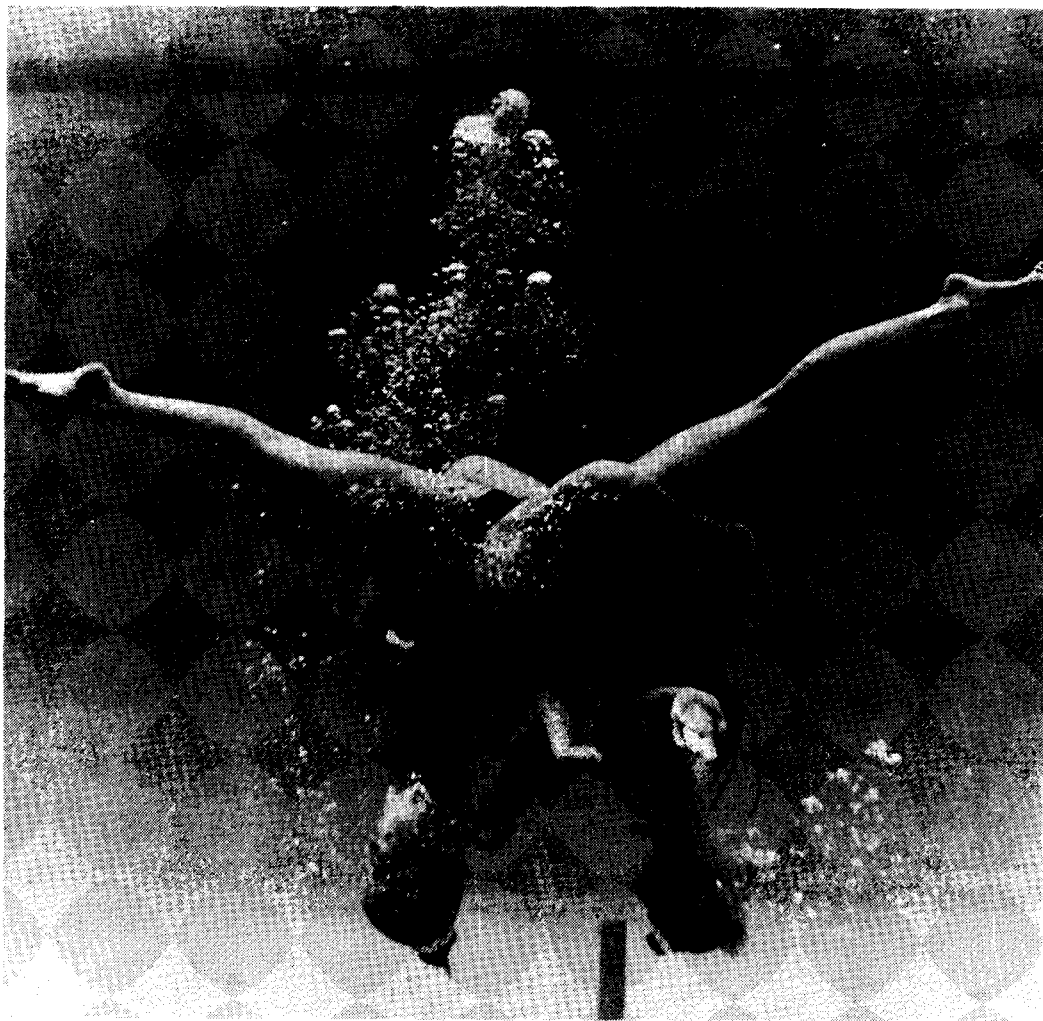


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"But the Southern states regard the organization of the Union as a more casual affair. As they entered it of their own free will, so they can leave it."

"But no provision was ever made in the Constitution for their leaving it."

"They say that this right is implicit."

"Nothing so astounding and fundamental would *not* be spelled out in the Constitution." Lincoln's voice grew slightly higher. Seward had read somewhere that when Lincoln made a speech his voice was like a tenor trumpet—a tenor trumpet of war, Seward thought, suddenly aware, for the first time, that war had become a possibility and that the traditional uses to which his sort of man was put—in particular, the tasks of conciliation and accommodation—would be of no avail. So many people had spoken for so long of the irrepressibility of conflict, to use his own phrase, that the fact that conflict might now be at hand made the cigar clenched between his teeth lose its savor. Worse, the whole matter might well be decided by the tall, thin figure sitting opposite him, profile silhouetted by winter light. At all costs, the Albany Plan must succeed.

Seward was beginning to get Lincoln's gauge; and he was afraid. He looked back down at his notes. "Your reasoning is good." Then he read, "'If a minority . . . will secede rather than submit, they make a precedent which, in turn, will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority.' That is plain."

"It is *all* so plain, Mr. Seward. That is the hard part. But I do my best to spell it out when I say, physically speaking, we cannot separate. It's not like a husband and wife getting a divorce and dividing up the property."

Seward nodded; and read, "'Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain either, you cease fighting, the identical questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.' That says it all, I guess."

"But to say is not to do."

"To say what is true is to do a lot in politics." Seward laughed; for some reason, the mood of panic had gone. "Not that I've had much experience along those lines."

Lincoln, to his relief, laughed too. "Who has?"

"I am afraid of your ending," said Seward, coming to the point.

"Too harsh?"

Seward nodded, and read, "'In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you.' " Seward looked up. "Let them fire the first shot, if shots are to be fired? which I pray not." Seward continued to read. " 'You can have no conflict without being yourself the aggressors. *You* have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while *I* shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend' it. With *you*, and not with *me*, is the solemn question of 'Shall it be peace, or the sword?' ' "

"That is the case. That is *my* case."

Seward inhaled the cigar smoke deeply, comfortably. "Never end a speech with a question."

Lincoln smiled. "For fear you'll get the wrong answer?"

Seward nodded. "People are perverse. I would cut all that I have just read. It is too menacing. I've written a paragraph to take its place. It's inside the case."

Lincoln opened the case and withdrew the speech, which he had had, in greatest secrecy, set up in type by a printer so that there would be exact copies for the wire services as opposed to the usual garbled reporters' or recorders' shorthand notes, or confusion over his own not always clear calligraphy. Lincoln read to himself Seward's flowery coda. He nodded. "I can use some of this. If you don't mind my turning it into my own words."

"It's yours, sir. You'll cut the other?"

"I can't cut the part about the oath that I have sworn to uphold the Constitution. That is what gives me—and the Union—our legitimacy in the eyes of heaven."

"I did not think of you as a religious man, Mr. Lincoln."

"I am not, in any usual sense. But I believe in fate—and necessity. I believe in this Union. That is *my* fate, I suppose. And my necessity."

"You are a man of sentiment," said Seward. "I had not known that." Seward rose. "Since there has always been a rumor that you were not a proper Christian and churchgoer—"

"Founded, I'm afraid, on my *impropriety* and chronic absence from church."

"I, as an important layman of the Episcopal Church, am going to take you over to St. John's, where the minister and congregation will be able to see that you are at peace with Our Lord Jesus Christ, and they will then spread the good news."

Lincoln laughed; and got to his feet. Then he noticed the pile of newspapers beside his chair. He frowned. "Did you see *The New York Times*?"

On principle, Seward said that he had not, while doing his best to anticipate Lincoln's response. "Sir," Seward began, "there was no doubt about the plot in Baltimore . . ."

"If there had been a plot, why was no attempt made on the cars that I was supposed to be in?"

"Because everyone in Baltimore knew by then that you had already gone through the city."

"No, I've made an error that I'll never live down. According to the *Times* I arrived in the city wearing a Scotsman's plaid hat and a cloak. What sort of idle malice invents such a thing?"

"It is the nature of newspapers. I suppose the writer wanted to make the cartoonist's job easier."

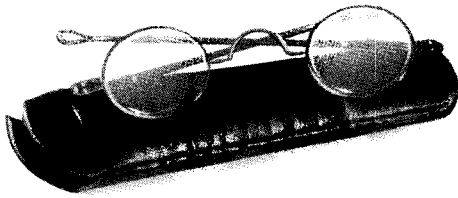
"He has. I'll be shown with that hat and cloak from one end of the country to the other. Such lies go out all the time," said Lincoln darkly, "on the telegraph."

"It is a hazard of our estate, sir. Will Mrs. Lincoln join us?"

"No, she's going off with her cousins to see the sights, which is ironic, since she is the churchgoer of the family."

"Then she need *not* go to St. John's, as her soul is saved."

So, together, Seward and Lincoln, guarded by the watchful Lamon, made their way across Lafayette Square, where David Herold stood in the crowd that had gathered—the minister had already spread the word that the President-elect would attend the morning service. David watched the tall man as he walked slowly by, lifting his hat to the people who greeted him. David thought that the old man looked surprisingly pleasant and friendly. In a way, it was a shame that he was going to be shot just before he took his oath of office, by two of the wild boys who, even now, were at target practice across the river in Alexandria, Virginia.



THE DAY OF THE INAUGURAL, MARCH 4, DAVID HEROLD was awake at dawn. Since this was not a day to be missed, he had slept in all his clothes, including the disintegrating shoes. As he slept on a bunk in a sort of larder off the kitchen, there were no creaking stairs to worry about. He could hear throughout the house the heavy breathing and restive movements of seven women, all flesh of his flesh. He still longed for a brother to do things with, like . . . well, go to the Capitol and watch Old Abe get shot.

The morning was misty; and not cold. The frozen mud had melted, yielding the first crocuses and snowdrops of the season. At the Capitol, a few streets from David's house, there was no crowd as yet; nor any sign of one. But there were troops everywhere. Some were in regulation blue; others were in dark green, with sharpshooters' rifles. They appeared to be searching for . . . wild boys? wondered David, happy to be a mere onlooker.

No one tried to stop David as he walked right up to the small wooden platform that had been built on the Capitol's east steps. The platform had a roof to it, presumably in order to keep anyone from shooting Lincoln from high up. Then David wandered over to the Capitol's north side, where, to his surprise, a pair of long wooden walls had been built between the plaza and the entrance to the Senate chamber. This meant that when Lincoln got out of his carriage, he would be shielded by two walls of planking as he made his way into the Capitol.

David still remembered the last inaugural vividly. He and the wild boys had had a marvelous time, whooping it up, cheering the President, Old Buck, and the beautiful lady got up as the Goddess of Liberty, as she stood on a moving float just in front of Old Buck's carriage while back of him there was a second float on which had been placed an entire warship filled with sailors. But today there were no signs of splendor. There were few flags in evidence and

none of the red, white, and blue bunting that was traditionally used to decorate the speaker's stand on Inaugural Day. On the other hand, he had never seen so many soldiers.

As David made his way up Pennsylvania Avenue to Fifteenth Street, the town was coming awake. The usual Negro population was being added to by the thousands of out-of-towners who had filled up the hotels. Early as it was, a crowd had gathered in front of Brown's Hotel, and, as always, Willard's was the center of much activity. David stared up at the windows of Lincoln's suite. The presidential parlor was right over the main door, and an American flag had been attached to the window.

"Hello, David!" David turned and saw the round, cherubic face of Scipione Grillo, a professional musician, who had just opened a restaurant next to one of the town's most popular theaters.

"Hey, Skippy!" This was Mr. Grillo's universal nickname. "What're you doing up so early?"

"I go to the Center Market. I go buy food. We have a full house for every meal today."

"What's at the theater?"

"I don't notice. But whatever's there, we got good audiences." Skippy maintained that he could always tell what a play was like by what its audience drank at his bar. For instance, they drank wine or champagne before and after a good comedy while good tragedy required champagne before and whiskey after. But if it was an opera, there was little or no drinking, because Americans know nothing of music, said Skippy; and that was why he was abandoning music for the food-and-drink business.

David knew every theater manager in the town. As a result, he could almost always get a seat in the gallery for nothing. If he brought Annie Surratt or some other girl, he was expected to pay for the one ticket. If he should have no money left after a performance at Ford's, Skippy would give him a free beer. In payment, David would do odd jobs for Skippy. He also worked for the various theater managements whenever an extra hand was needed to help load or unload scenery. He was besotted with the theater. In fact, had he been taller and his teeth less bucked, he would have been an actor; or, perhaps, a theater manager.

"You going to watch the inaugural parade, Skippy?"

"How can I? I make dinner. Anyway, there's only the two bands. If there was the three, I'd be there. But I play violin tonight at the Union Ball. Mr. Scala needs me, he said. Marine Band's weak in the string section, he says."

"So you'll get to see the whole lot."

"All I look at is the sheet music, these new dances . . . !"

JOHN HAY WAS AT WORK IN PARLOR SUITE ONE WITH NICOLAY. Two large crates lay open on the floor and Hay was transferring folders filled with applications, affidavits, supplications, yellowed newspaper cuttings, and fervent prayers from the room's wardrobe to the cases. "We have received, personally, nine hundred and twelve applications for jobs," said Hay, studying the last of the folders.

Technology and Jobs

If you wanted to phone someone about 50 years ago, you had to go through the operator. The dial telephone was a rarity in those days. When the phone company began introducing dial telephones, there was a great fear among telephone operators that they would be thrown out of work.

Workers formed "dial conversion committees" to slow down or stop the introduction of the dial telephone. These committees failed. Dial telephones were introduced. But—operators were not thrown out of work. In fact, the opposite happened. Their numbers increased substantially.

Why? The new technology allowed the telephone system to expand more rapidly than anyone ever expected.

The fear that technology would eliminate jobs is not peculiar to our century. It goes back at least to the first part of the last century. It was then that groups of English workers tried to prevent the industrialization of Britain by wrecking factories and machinery. They thought the machines were going to take away their jobs. In fact, the machines increased the number of jobs well beyond anyone's wildest dreams.

One of the few things on which economists of all different schools agree is that the idea that technology reduces jobs is a fallacy. It's a fallacy because it assumes that the total amount of work to be done in any economic system is fixed.

It's really not fixed at all. It's changing constantly. And for many reasons. New consumer demands, population increases, technology—they all work to increase employment.

In the last 30 years, for instance, America has added 30 million people to the ranks of the employed. Many of them work in industries that only came into being because of new technology.

In fact, high-technology industries create jobs eight times as fast as low-technology industries. And a U.S. Commerce Department study finds that from 1957 to 1973, the output of technologically-intensive industries grew 45 percent faster than that of other industries. Employment increased 88 percent faster.

The microelectronics industry is an obvious example. This industry did not even exist 30 years ago. Today it's the world's ninth largest industry. And it's growing. It's expected to be the fourth largest by the end of this decade.

Certainly any industry with this kind of record has a positive impact on jobs. In fact, in the past decade the rate of job growth in microelectronics has been twice as fast as the national average. And the industry is giving rise to entirely new kinds of service jobs that rely on microelectronic products. They're all part of our growing information society.

The greatest threat to the labor force today is—lack of technology. Business faces international competition. And technology is international. Preventing or delaying its introduction in one country would mean its even more successful introduction in other countries. Companies need to invest aggressively in technological innovation if they are to remain competitive—and create new jobs.



A word on energy



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"It seems more like nine thousand." Nicolay still retained a slight German accent, which Hay enjoyed imitating. Nicolay sat at a table, making a report to the President on which applications seemed promising.

"How much longer does this go on?"

"Until we leave office."

"I had no idea," said Hay, who had indeed had none. "I thought a few people might show up and he'd give them a postmaster's job and that was that. But we're going to have to deal with all thirty million Americans before we're through."

"Less the twelve million or so Mr. Davis has to find jobs for." In the distance, there was a premonitory roll of drums.

"Did you know Mr. Seward was thick as thieves with Mr. Davis, right up to a few weeks ago when he left town and the Union?"

Nicolay nodded. "The Tycoon wanted the two of them to talk as much as possible."

Hay frowned. "Do you think Mr. Seward's really serious about taking himself out of the Cabinet?" Hay had been present in Lincoln's parlor when the Albany Plan had been revealed. The New York delegation, echoing Seward, had insisted that Lincoln exclude Chase from the Cabinet, which should be made up entirely of Whigs, instead of the four Democrats and three Whigs that Lincoln had in mind. When Lincoln had reminded the New Yorkers that he, too, was a Whig, which evened things, they had still been intransigent. They warned the Tycoon that Seward would not serve with Chase, to which Lincoln replied that he would be sorry to give up his first Cabinet slate in favor of a second list that he had prepared; but if that was the case, then he would appoint that good Whig Mr. Dayton as secretary of state, while Mr. Seward could go as minister to London, a city that he had so recently taken by storm.

Alarmed, the New Yorkers withdrew, their Albany Plan a temporary failure.

Seward's rage when Lincoln's words were repeated to him resulted in a letter of withdrawal from the Cabinet. Lincoln had chosen not to accept Seward's defection, and had responded with a polite note, asking Seward to remain where he was. As Lincoln signed the letter, he said, half to himself, half to Hay, "I can't afford to let Seward take the first trick."

"Personally," said Nicolay, "I'd rather Seward stayed out. But . . ."

The door to the parlor opened, and the vast Lamon filled the doorway. "He wants to see you boys." Lamon lumbered out of view.

"What's Lamon going to be in the government?" asked Hay.

"Marshal of the District of Columbia, which means he can go on being a bodyguard."

"One of many, let's hope."

The city was filled with alarming reports. The President would be shot on his way to the Capitol. The President would be shot at the Capitol. The President would be kidnapped at the Inaugural Ball and taken across the Long

Bridge to Virginia and held hostage. Of all the rumors, this one struck Hay as a possibility. It had also enlivened General Scott, who had placed two sharpshooters in every window that looked upon the eastern portico of the Capitol, as well as sharpshooters all up and down Pennsylvania Avenue, not to mention plainclothesmen everywhere.

Lincoln himself seemed indifferent. For the past few days he had been preoccupied with the Virginians, who were holding a convention at Richmond to determine whether or not to secede. More than once, Hay had heard Lincoln pleading with one Virginian after another. Currently, the remaining Southerners in the Congress were particularly exercised by something called the Force Bill, which would give the President the right to call out the militia and accept volunteers into the armed forces. Lincoln had agreed privately—and, Hay thought, cravenly—to reject the bill if that would satisfy Virginia. On Friday, acting on Lincoln's instructions, just before the Force Bill was to be voted on, Washburne had asked for an adjournment of the House. With this adjournment, the Thirty-Sixth Congress expired. But not before, as a further gesture to the Southerners, Lincoln's party supported a measure never, ever, to interfere with the institution of slavery in those states where slavery was legal. On that note of conciliation, the House of Representatives shut up shop on Monday, March 4, the day of Lincoln's inauguration. The Senate remained in session.

Nicolay and Hay proceeded down the police-lined corridor to Parlor Suite Six. Lincoln sat in his usual place beside the window, the light behind him, his glasses on his nose. Mrs. Lincoln, the three sons, the half-dozen female relations of Mrs. Lincoln's, quite filled the room.

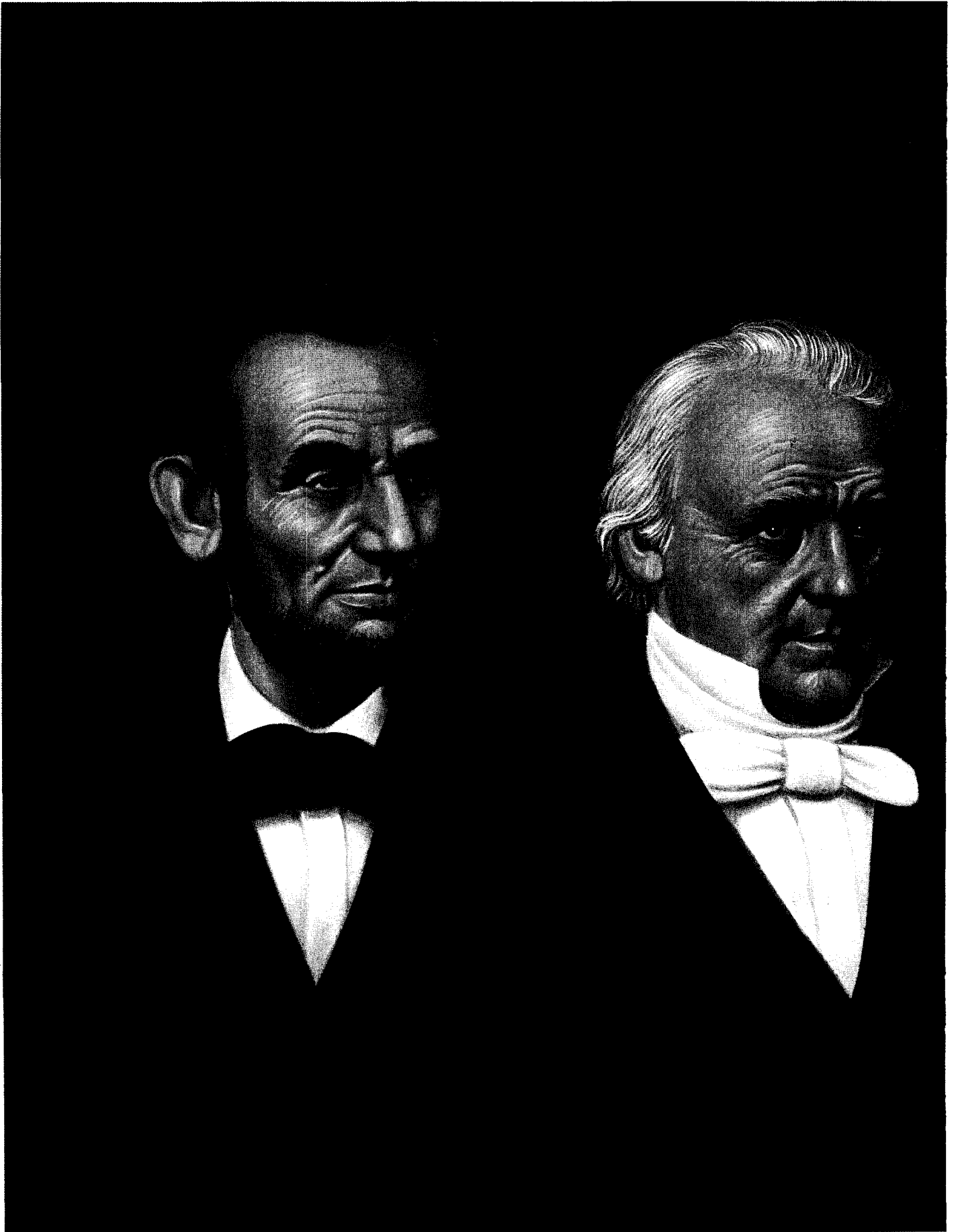
Hay had never seen Mr. Lincoln so well turned out. He wore a new black suit that still fit him. But Hay knew that by the time that restless, angular body had finished pushing and prodding with knees and elbows, the suit would resemble all his others. For the present, the white of the shirtfront shone like snow, while beside his chair, next to the all-important gripsack, was a new cane with a large gold knob. Hay could see that Mrs. Lincoln's expensive taste had prevailed.

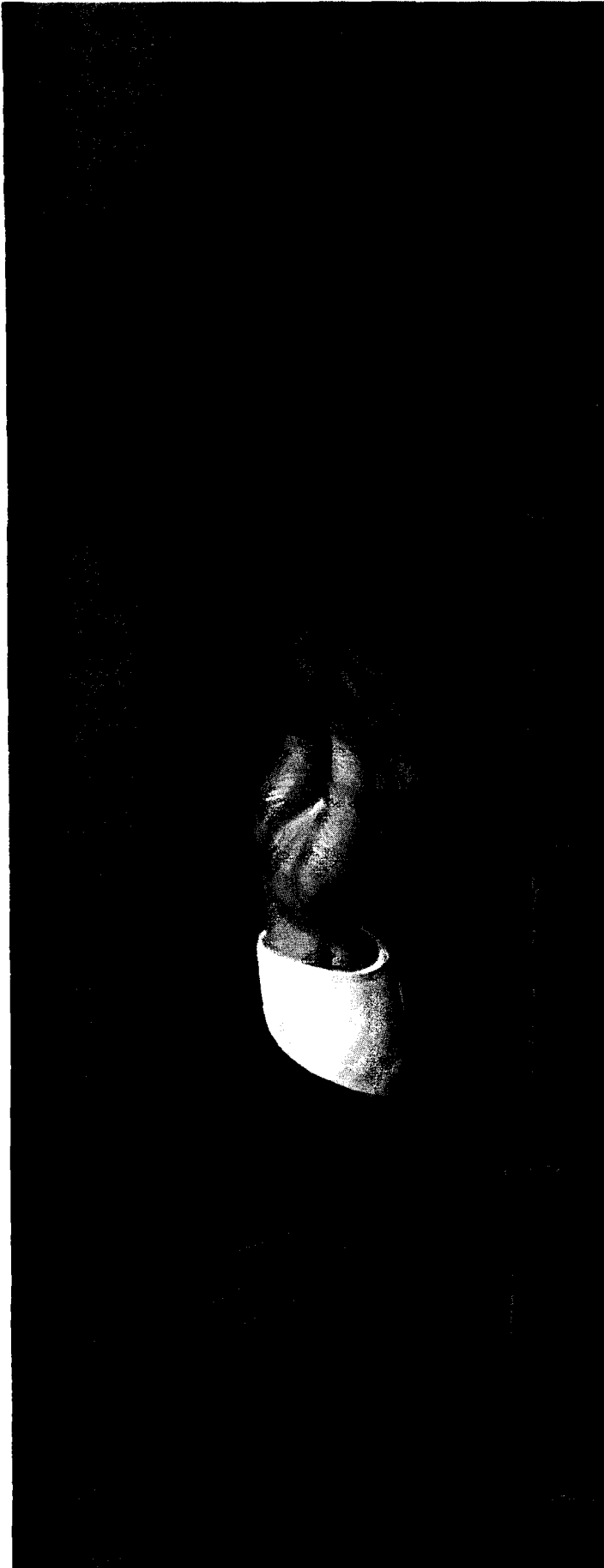
"Gentlemen," Lincoln greeted his secretaries formally. "We are about to be joined by the marshal-in-chief, who will put us in our carriages, show us our seats, give us our orders . . ." There was a sound of cheering outside the window. Then a fanfare of trumpets. Lincoln got to his feet and peered out. "Well, if it's not the President himself, I'd say it's a very good likeness."

Mary had rushed to the window. "It's Mr. Buchanan! He's come to fetch you."

"In a sense," Lincoln smiled. "Now, I shall want a lot of Illinois and"—he nodded to certain of Mrs. Todd's relatives—"Kentucky dignity."

With that, the marshal-in-chief appeared in the doorway. For a moment, Hay feared that Lamon would not let him through. "Mr. Lincoln, the President," proclaimed the marshal.





The aged Buchanan, as white of face as of hair, came forward to the center of the room. Lincoln crossed to him. They shook hands warmly. "I am here, sir," said the President, "to escort you to the Capitol."

"I am grateful, Mr. President, for your courtesy."

The two men left the room together. At the door Buchanan gestured for Lincoln to go first; but Lincoln stepped to one side, and the still-reigning President went through the door.

The marshal-in-chief explained who was to go in what carriage. There would be individual marshals—each with a blue scarf and white rosette—assigned to Mrs. Lincoln, to the sons, and to the ladies. Fortunately, Hay and Nicolay were allowed to follow Buchanan and Lincoln down the stairs to the lobby, where the police were holding back a considerable crowd. There was cheering at the sight of Lincoln. "Our applicants!" said Hay to Nicolay.

"Wait till we get outside," said Nicolay ominously.

Buchanan and Lincoln, now arm in arm, stood in the hotel's doorway. A sudden storm of cheering—and of booing—was promptly drowned out by Major Scala's Marine Band, which struck up "Hail to the Chief" as President and President-elect proceeded to get into their open carriage. A nervous marshal then hustled Hay and Nicolay into a barouche, already filled with Washburne and Lamon.

Hay found Washburne edgy; and Lamon uncharacteristically relaxed. But then Lamon had turned his friend and charge over to the United States Army, and if they could not protect him today, no one could. Washburne stared out of the window at the thin crowd along the brick sidewalk on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue. There was no sidewalk nor much of anything else on the south side, which, after a few blocks of houses and the Gothic red-brick Smithsonian Institution, turned into a marshland, the result of overflow from the canal that ended in the muddy waters of the Potomac River, on whose banks poison ivy and oak grew in wreaths like sinister laurel.

"That is a dangerous crowd," Washburne stared out the window. They were now abreast the Kirkwood House. Thus far, there had been neither cheers nor boos for the two Presidents up ahead.

"They're all secesh in this town," said Lamon, whose pronounced Virginia accent sounded somewhat incongruous to Hay.

"And spoiling for a fight," said Washburne.

"Watch the cavalry up ahead," Lamon pointed to the two rows of horsemen that flanked the presidential carriage. The men rode in such close order that anyone standing on the sidewalk would be unable to get more than a glimpse of the occupants of the carriage.

"Notice how the horses are sort of skittish?" Lamon gave a satisfied smile. "That was my idea. When you get your horses pulling this way and that, it's going to be mighty hard for anyone with a gun to get himself a proper sight."

David Herold had exactly the same thought. With Annie on his arm, he stood in front of Woodward's and watched

the strangely silent parade. "You can't see either of them," he complained.

"Well, we'll get to see them both pretty clear when they come out on the Capitol steps."

"And when they do . . ." David began; but Annie pinched his arm, for silence.

There was only one float, drawn by four white horses; it represented the Republican Association. On top of the float, girls dressed in white represented each of the states of the Union that was no longer. The girls themselves were roundly cheered from the sidewalk; the Union was not.

David and Annie walked beside the float until they came to the plaza in front of the Capitol. Since noon, close to ten thousand people had been gathering. Boys sat in trees. A photographer had built himself a wooden platform where he was busily trying to get his camera in place while fighting off the boys and men who wanted to share the view with him.

Shoving and pushing, David and Annie were soon within a few yards of the speakers' platform, where a single row of troops held back the crowd. Above the platform, on the steps, the great folk of Washington were being led to their seats by ushers. David stared with awe at the foreign diplomats in uniforms that seemed made of pure gold or silver, while the ladies were resplendent in furs and velvet cloaks. The day had started to turn cold.

"My God," whispered Annie, "have you ever seen so many soldiers!" Soldiers were indeed everywhere; and under the eye of the Commanding General himself, who sat in huge, solitary splendor in his carriage on a nearby eminence. Winfield Scott had sworn a mighty oath that this President would take office, no matter what.

There was cheering from the north portico, which they could not see from where they were standing. "They're going inside the Senate now."

"I know," said Annie. "I read the same paper. Did you take the job with Mr. Thompson?"

"Yes."

"I'm glad."

"Why?"

"Everyone should work."

"You don't."

"I'm still at the seminary. But I'm going to be a music teacher when I graduate and then . . . oh, look! The Zouaves!"

In fire-red uniforms, a company of soldiers under the command of their uncommonly beautiful drillmaster, the curly-haired, twenty-three-year-old Elmer E. Ellsworth, a pet of the Lincoln family, began to divert the crowd with an intricate and somewhat eccentric close-order drill. David was ravished at the sight; and filled with a profound envy. Why wasn't he wearing that extraordinary uniform? And doing those extraordinary tricks? And making Annie and every girl in the crowd gasp with admiration while impressing even the wild boys who were scattered throughout the crowd, ready, as always, for violence, preferably impromptu.

Inside the Senate Chamber, John Hay had not the slightest envy of Hannibal Hamlin, the newly sworn-in Vice-President of the United States. On the other hand, from his seat in the crowded gallery, he quite liked the look of the Senate Chamber. They might never get a proper dome on the Capitol, but Congress had seen to it that the Senate and the House of Representatives were splendidly housed in chambers of marble, decorated in red and gold and bronze, to set off the solemn statesmen in their rusty black, each with his own armchair and desk, snuffbox and shining spittoon.

Hannibal Hamlin spoke well and to the point, and for a moment Hay actually looked and listened to the new Vice-President, who was so dark-complexioned that his predecessor sitting beside him on the high dais, John C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky, had been quoted as having said it was highly suitable that a radical government such as that of Mr. Lincoln should have for its Vice-President a mulatto. But mulatto or not, Hamlin was a former Democratic senator from Maine, who had helped found the Republican Party. Before the election, Lincoln and his running mate Hamlin had never met. Hay was constantly surprised to learn how little these Northern men of state knew one another, as opposed to the Southerners, who seemed all to have been brought up in the same crib.

After the election, Lincoln had invited his Vice-President-to-be to Chicago. They got on well, confounding the old Washington saw: There goes the Vice-President, with nothing on his mind but the President's health. Hamlin had introduced Lincoln to raw oysters; and Lincoln had said, "Well, I suppose I must deal with these, too." The two men had got on so well that Lincoln had told Hamlin that as he intended to place only one New Englander in the Cabinet, Hamlin could make the choice, which turned out to be a Connecticut newspaper editor named Gideon Welles. Somewhat reluctantly, Lincoln made him secretary of the Navy.

Hay looked up at the presidential party. Buchanan and Lincoln were seated side by side in the center of the gallery. Lincoln was as dark as Buchanan was white. For all the talk of *Old Abe*, most people who met Lincoln were startled to find that, at fifty-two, he had not a gray hair in his black shock, which was, for the moment, contained by the barber's art and Mary Todd's firm brushwork. But once out of public view, the long fingers would start to stray through that haystack, and in no time at all, three cowlicks in opposition would make his head look like an Indian warbonnet.

Lincoln seemed distracted, thinking no doubt of his speech—which had been sent, secretly, to old Mr. Francis Blair, at Silver Spring, read and admired, and sent back. How close was Lincoln to Mr. Blair? How close was he to anyone? Hay was still as new to Lincoln's relations with others as, presumably, they were. But Hay did wonder how on earth Lincoln would meet the present crisis, living in a Southern city, with a government that was more than half Southern and a Cabinet filled with rivals. Plainly, Lincoln was equally bemused. There were times when he would

simply drift off in the middle of a conversation, while the curiously heavy-lidded left eye, always the indicator of his mood, would half shut, and he would no longer be present. But the eye was alert today, as far as Hay could tell from his end of the chamber, where the smell of men's cologne and ladies' perfume could not quite mask the stale odors of bodies imperfectly bathed. Hay's nose was sharp, his standards of hygiene high.

Hamlin was finished at last. He shook hands with the somber Breckinridge. Then the two Presidents rose, as the marshal-in-chief came to escort them to the east portico.

Hay followed the black-robed justices of the Supreme Court onto the Capitol steps; he breathed the fresh air, gratefully. A sharp wind had started up, and Hay was suddenly terrified that Lincoln's speech would be blown from his hands. If it were, could the Tycoon remember it? No. The speech was so closely argued that if one word should be misplaced, a half-dozen more states would secede.

A justice's robe flapping in his face, Hay walked down the steps of the Capitol. Half the notables were already seated. The other half had packed the Senate Chamber. Members of the Congress, Supreme Court, Cabinet-to-be, as well as chiefs of foreign missions and high-ranking army and naval officers, each with family, assembled to participate in history. Hay took his seat next to Nicolay, just above the platform.

Nicolay pointed to the crowd. "Mr. Lincoln drew twice as many people as this just in Albany."

"Well, New York State voted for him," said Hay, "and these people didn't. There must be . . . what? ten thousand out there?"

"See the rifles?" Nicolay pointed to a boardinghouse across the Capitol plaza. Each window contained a man with a rifle.

"All trained on us," said Hay. He had always found the idea of assassination more exciting than not. But now he realized with a chill that had nothing to do with the March wind that he was seated just a row above the speakers' platform, with a thousand military rifles all aimed in his direction, not to mention who knew how many plug-uglies with hidden pistols and derringers and knives, ready to commit slaughter. He pulled his hat over his eyes, as if for protection.

The appearance of Lincoln and Buchanan had been greeted with unenthusiastic applause. Neither David nor Annie had so much as clapped a hand when the tall, dark-haired man took his seat behind a low table. David did notice how awkwardly Lincoln handled himself. He was no actor, David thought, scornfully, as he watched Lincoln take off his hat and then hold it in the same hand as the cane, to which he was plainly unused, while, with the other hand, he removed his speech from an inside pocket and then was obliged to transfer the speech to the hand that held both hat and cane. Crazy and old as Edwin Forrest was, he could certainly give Lincoln lessons in how to move, thought David; and how to die.

David looked at the men in the trees but could not find a

familiar face. Surely the National Volunteers had not given up. He would have bet his last penny, which was in his pocket, that they would make their attempt. At the moment he felt the same excitement that he did in the theater when the musical overture, dominated by drums, began.

When all the dignitaries were in place, a distinguished-looking old man rose and came down to the front of the platform; and in a voice that David approved of, full of baritone drama, and even better, with arms outstretched like Edwin Forrest's when between the acts of whatever play he did nowadays, he would come out and, to the audience's delight, with wondrous fury attack his wife, the old man proclaimed, "Fellow citizens, I introduce to you, Abraham Lincoln, the President-elect of the United States!" Even David felt like applauding the old man, whoever he was. Meanwhile, Lincoln was having trouble with hat, cane, speech. He stood a moment, trying to manipulate the three, until a short, stocky man David recognized as Stephen Douglas, the defeated Democratic candidate, leaned forward and took the hat from Lincoln, who gave him a grateful smile. Lincoln then placed the cane on the table, put on his spectacles, moved to stage right of the table, which looked like a milking stool next to such a tall man, and began to read.

"Look," whispered Annie, "his hands are shaking."

"Wouldn't yours?"

Annie elbowed David in the ribs.

Hay was suffering stage fright for the Tycoon, who had never before sounded so tentative, even quavery of voice. Nevertheless, Hay knew that the high voice could be heard from one end of the plaza to the other. Lincoln was used to vast crowds in the open air. "Fellow citizens of the United States." The high voice was tremulous. "In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take, in your presence, the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States . . ." Hay was relieved that at the mention of the Constitution Lincoln's voice lost its quaver. He was now moving onto his own formidable high ground, as he made the case for the Union.

Back among the senators, Salmon P. Chase could not help but contrast how different his own speech on this day might have been. For one thing, he would *never* have read out that provision in the Constitution that slaves be returned to their lawful masters. Chase shuddered as Lincoln elaborated. "It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the law-giver is the law."

"Shameful," Chase muttered to Sumner, who sat very straight behind him. Sumner nodded, listening closely.

"All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other."

Sumner turned to Chase. "What he is doing is giving up the slaves in order to restore the Union."

"That is immoral."

"It is worse," said Sumner. "It is *impossible*."

For Mary the speech was the finest that she had ever heard; and she had heard Henry Clay and Judge Douglas; had heard her own husband proclaim that a house divided against itself cannot stand, losing thereby a Senate seat to Douglas while gaining the presidency for himself. She was also pleased that the new suit fitted him so well; and she was looking forward to showing off her own new wardrobe to the ladies of Washington who had, thus far, refused to call on her because, she had read in the press, they disdained her as some uncouth Westerner, unused to Washington's aristocratic ways. She, Mary Todd, of the great Kentucky Todd family, first lady of Springfield even before she was married, an invitation to whose mansion was the dream of every Illinois lady, if only to observe Mary preside over her witty and elegant court, known, far and wide, as the Coterie. Uncouth!

There was the sharp cracking sound of a gun being fired. Mary gasped. Lincoln stopped in his speech. All Mary could think was—has he been hit? But Lincoln was still standing, if mute. There was a murmur through the crowd. Hay craned forward to see if Lincoln was all right. Apparently, he was; but his face had gone chalk white.

David stood on tiptoe and looked off to the left, where the shot had come from. "Who did it?" whispered Annie. "Can you see?"

"Soldiers, I think." David watched as six soldiers converged on a tree. Then a soldier held up a thick branch. A dazed-looking man was brushing himself off. There was laughter.

"A branch broke off," said David sadly, "under some fellow's weight."

Annie was equally disappointed.

Lincoln resumed his speech. As he came to the coda, Seward leaned forward, eager to hear what Lincoln had cut from his own speech and what of Seward's paragraph he had used.

"You can have no conflict, without yourselves being the aggressors. *You* have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government . . ." Seward frowned: this was hard, too hard. ". . . while *I* shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend' it."

Seward waited for the challenge "With *you*, and not with *me*, is the solemn question, 'Shall it be peace, or the Sword?'" To his great relief, Lincoln had cut this most dangerous question, and in its place came Seward's text, ruthlessly pruned of its richer blossoms. "I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords . . ."

Seward, eyes shut, chanted softly his own original phrase: "The majestic chords which, proceeding from so many battlefields and so many patriotic graves, pass through all the hearts and all the hearths . . ." Tears came to Seward's eyes whenever he declaimed this particular passage, first tried out many years ago at Utica. But Lincoln had changed the language. With some irritability, Seward

heard the trumpet voice intone the new ". . . mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they *will* be, by the better angels of our nature."

Lincoln stopped; took off his glasses; put the speech into his pocket. As Seward applauded politely, he could not help but think how odd it was that some men have a natural gift for elevated language while others have none at all. Lincoln had made a perfect hash of Seward's most splendid peroration. Since any one of Seward's speeches was apt to sell nearly one million copies, he had, suddenly, the sense of being jilted—worse, of being a great beauty abandoned at the altar by a plain and unworthy man. But Seward would prevail in time. The Albany Plan may have misfired, but since the principle of it was still very much in his mind, he had taken back his letter of withdrawal. He would be secretary of state; and prime minister yet.

Chase turned to Sumner. "What does he mean?"

Sumner was bemused. "He will take the South back—slaves and all. Anything, to preserve the Union."

"Thank God, they will not come."

"Thank God, they will not come, without a bloody war."

The speech was well enough received by the crowd in the plaza. Lincoln had now recovered his color, Hay noticed. The new President stood beside the small table waiting for the ancient Chief Justice to give him the oath of office.

At the age of eighty-three, Roger B. Taney was several years older than the Constitution, whose interpreter he had been for a quarter century, as the fifth Chief Justice of the United States. Seward was peculiarly aware of the irony of the present situation. Had the fragile, withered Chief Justice not said, in the course of a decision to return a slave to his master, that Congress had no right to ban slavery from any territory, Abraham Lincoln would not now be President. Lincoln looked down, gravely, at the little man, who did not look up at him but looked only at the Bible in his right hand. In an inaudible voice, Taney administered the oath. Then Lincoln, hand on the Bible, turned from the Chief Justice to the crowd assembled and, ignoring the slip of paper on which his response had been printed, declared in a voice that made even Chase's cold blood turn warm, "I, Abraham Lincoln, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and I will, to the best of my ability . . ."

Lincoln turned full face to the crowd in the windswept plaza; and the famous war trumpet of a voice, until now muted, sounded its declaration and what was meant to be its justification for all time, ". . . preserve, protect and . . . *defend* the Constitution of the United States!"

On the word "defend," as if by prearrangement, the first battery of artillery began to fire; then the second; then all guns fired their salute to the new President, who remained at attention throughout the bombardment.

"My God," said Hay to Nicolay, "it is going to be war!" □

THE TIGERS OF NANZEN-JI

(Nanzen Temple, Kyoto)

These light-footed, celebrated
cats, created
on gold-leaf screens by a man
who'd never seen a tiger
(there were none in Japan),
who worked, as he'd been taught,
from pelts, and from paintings brought
from distant, brilliant China,

wander an extraordinary
maze whose very
air's alive, alit with breeze-
borne inebriants. It's a place
of tumbled boundaries
and whetted pendants, in which
big-chested brutes whose eyes are rich
outsize eggs of burnished gold,

whose coats are cloudy, glowing
masses flowing
behind an emerald palisade
of bamboo and the row
of darker palings made
by their own sable bands, glide
fatefully in the failing light, wide
mouths agape and bared teeth flashing.

It's an hour of satisfying
runs and flying
ambitions, as gravity's
traction relaxes a little
and hunting tigers freeze
into a fine, deepening
tensity, muscles marshaling
toward that signal opportune instant

when the commanding soul emerges:

Now—

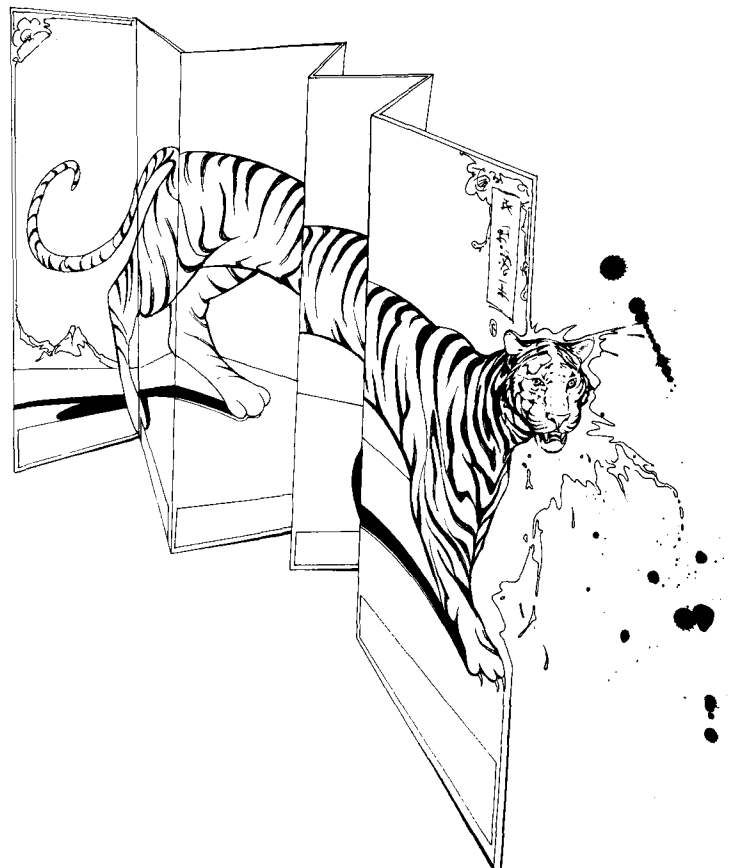
Now, it urges,
and the breaking body slides
upon the air's broad back
and hangs there, rides and rides
with limbs outstretched—but claws
bedded in their velvet-napped paws,
for there will be no killings tonight.

*All bloodshed is forbidden
here . . .*

That's the hidden
message of these grounds, which threads
like a stream around the pines
and rocks and iris beds.
The danger's all a bluff, an
artful dumb show staged by a clan-
destine family of tigers

with Chinese dragon faces,
whose grimaces
and slashing, cross-eyed glances serve
to conceal the grins that beckon
you into the preserve
of a rare, ferociously
playful mind. Enter. You are free
from harm here. There's nothing to fear.

—Brad Leithauser



*Chasing tornadoes in the Texas panhandle
with meteorologists from the National Severe Storms Laboratory*

ON THE DRYLINE

BY WILLIAM HAUPTMAN

THE ATMOSPHERE IS UNSTABLE. FROM THE NORTH, A cold front is advancing, and thunderstorms are developing all around us. It's Friday, May 13, 1983, and Oklahoma is under a severe-weather watch. Tornadoes are expected before the day is out.

The research meteorologists I'm riding with couldn't be happier. They're from the National Severe Storms Laboratory, in Norman, Oklahoma, and today they hope to find one of these tornadoes and photograph it at as close a range as possible. Our Chevrolet van is packed with a motion-picture camera loaded with high-resolution film, several still cameras, and a tape recorder on which the meteorologists keep a running log of observations. Later, back at the laboratory, they will go over the data carefully. Once we sight a tornado, there won't be time for reflection.

I'm a little worried about how close we might get to a tornado (some teams have come within a mile), but not my companions. Robert Davies-Jones, the director of the tornado-intercept project, seems to be interested only in where we're going to eat tonight. Donald Burgess, who's driving, runs through the choices: Arby's, Roy Rogers, the Bonanza Sirloin Pit. Davies-Jones, an Englishman, says dryly, "I would prefer Long John Silver's fish and chips."

It was noon when we left the laboratory. For almost three hours we've been heading west across an Oklahoma landscape broken only by grain elevators and telephone poles. A controller back in Norman relays information to us by radio: "Vernon reports a thunderstorm. . . . Radar shows a cell building near Altus." The young meteorologist sitting beside me in the back seat, Eric Rasmussen, is writing all of this down. He's looking for the storm most likely to produce a tornado.

Tornadoes are intense vortices of rising warm air, which appear as funnel clouds on the bases of thunderstorms. All thunderstorms are capable of producing tornadoes, but isolated thunderstorms are more likely to do so. Rasmussen thinks the best place to find such a storm today is on a dryline that has formed in the Texas Panhandle.

A dryline occurs when dry air comes to rest alongside of, and partially overlapping, moist air. It is the boundary between the two air masses. Drylines are common in the Pan-

handle, especially in April and May. This morning, when Rasmussen looked at the meteorological charts, he found sharply different moisture readings along an axis running north-south from Amarillo to Big Spring—that is, a dryline. To the east of the line, the air was humid; only a few miles away to the west, the air was bone dry. Some aspects of drylines are mysterious to meteorologists, but one thing is certain: along them, great thunderstorms often develop.

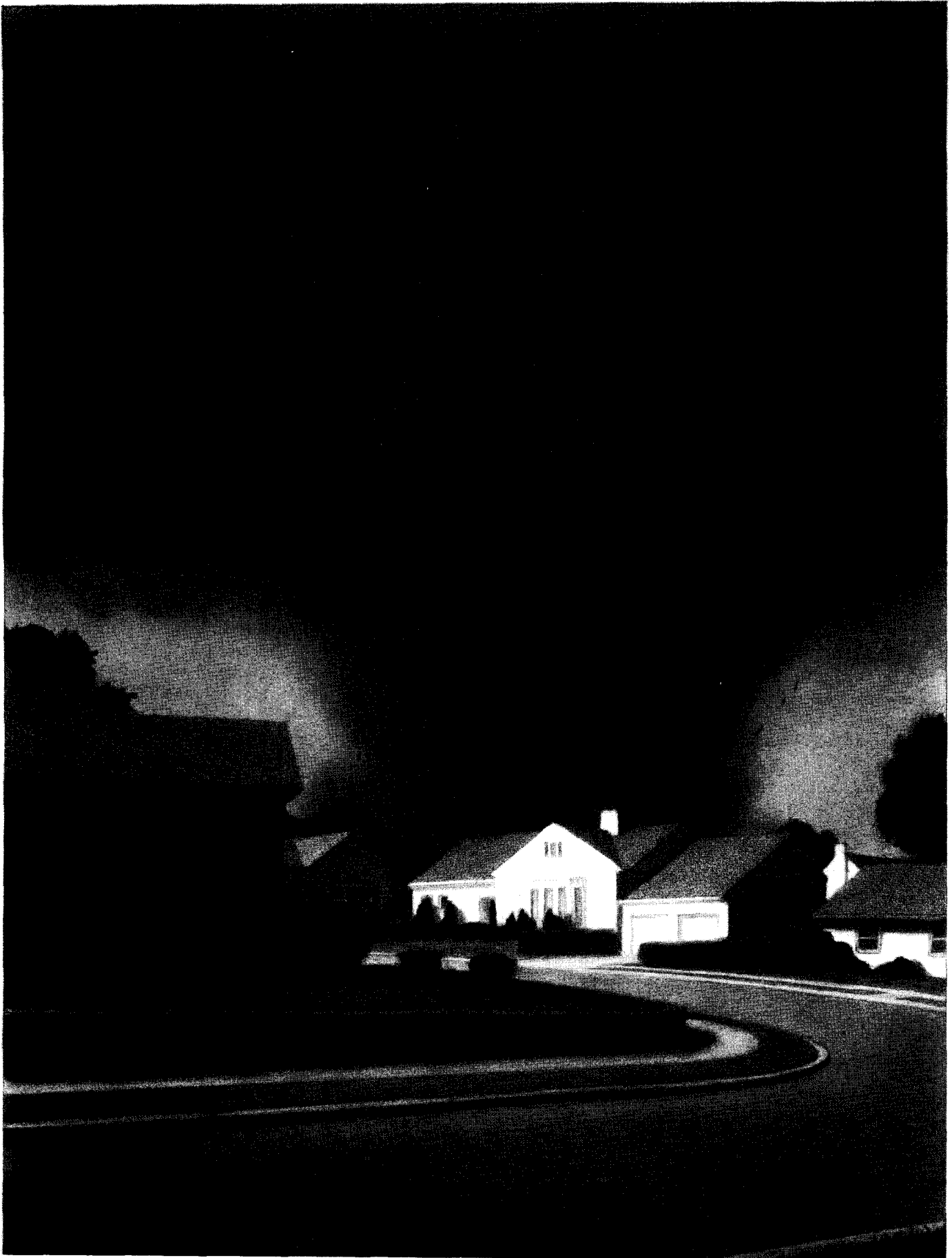
Right now, sunlight is heating the atmosphere and setting it in motion. Hot moist air is being pulled up through the cold dry air, and a storm at some point is almost inevitable. As the hot air reaches higher and cooler altitudes, its moisture will condense into drops of rain and particles of ice. The heat lost in condensation will provide energy for the storm to grow. Soon, the storm will display a definite structure: a column of rising moist air (the "core"), led by a curtain of rain (the "precipitation shaft").

Here in Oklahoma, in advance of the cold front, thunderstorms are developing in groups, and competing with one another for the heat and moisture that are their fuel. But a thunderstorm developing on the dryline, 150 miles away, will probably develop in isolation. As it travels to the northeast (the direction of today's prevailing winds), it will have all of the heat and moisture in the air to itself. It could become a towering cumulonimbus (referred to by meteorologists as a "Cb"), capable of engendering hail, flash floods, and lightning discharges of up to 100 million volts. This is the kind of storm that Rasmussen is hoping for, but where, along the nearly 200 miles of dryline, will it begin?

Rasmussen looks up from his notebook and says, "I think we're going to have a really big storm firing up east of Lubbock today." When he calls the laboratory, he learns that Lubbock radar shows no activity in the area, but he is not discouraged. He studied meteorology at Texas Tech University, in Lubbock, and knows just how storms in that part of the state evolve. Rasmussen is only twenty-six, but older meteorologists have told me to follow him if I want to see tornadoes. So far, he has found forty that he thinks are "worth counting." Older meteorologists call him the "Dryline Kid."

"I've got towering cumulus to the south," Burgess says. Through a break in the overcast, we can see a big storm, its anvil-shaped top streaming off over the countryside for a good fifty miles.

William Hauptman's play Big River, a musical version of Huckleberry Finn, opened this spring at the American Repertory Theatre, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Rasmussen puts on the radio headphones and talks to Norman. "That's the Altus storm," he tells us. "Radar shows a mesocyclone in that cell." A mesocyclone is the rotating circulation of air within a storm that often precedes a tornado. "There's another storm that should be crossing our path in a few minutes," he says.

Before long, we are under the second storm, and the overcast turns into the smooth, leaden bottom of a cumulonimbus. Shafts of rain fall from it. The meteorologists confer.

"Looks like you've got the beginning of a wall cloud there," Burgess says. He's talking about a cylinder of cloud protruding from the bottom of the storm—what a mesocyclone looks like to an observer on the ground. From it, in anywhere from a few minutes to an hour, a tornado funnel may descend.

Rasmussen takes moisture readings with his psychrometer and looks at the barometer on the seat beside him. "This doesn't look like much to me," he says. "There's no real structure; conditions are not that good. This just doesn't look to me like a very solid Cb."

"What about the Altus storm?" Burgess asks, looking south.

"I think we should keep going," Rasmussen replies. "My money's still on a big cell firing up near Lubbock later today, say between Silverton and Matador."

A hilltop near Elk City, Oklahoma, is the last point from which we can radio the laboratory for information. From here on, we will have to stop and use pay phones. Control in Norman is advised. "Go ahead if you think you've got to, but I won't be able to help you out there," Control says. "Also, I think you should know that the highway patrol's got a report of a tornado near Altus."

"We copy," Rasmussen says. "Anything else we should know?"

"Just got this: Silverton reports a heavy thunderstorm."

"That's it," Rasmussen says. "That's our storm. Let's go for it!"

At this point, I wonder if the meteorologists aren't being led by their hopes—by the thrill of playing a long shot. But Davies-Jones, thinking that the highway patrol's report may be false, decides to go along with the instincts of the Dryline Kid. "Time: sixteen hundred CST," he says into the tape recorder. "Just passed a Cb which is not too impressive visually, and are headed out to look for further activity in the Texas Panhandle."

DAVIES-JONES LOOKS LIKE A SOCCER PLAYER, WITH his tennis shoes, athletic build, and long blond hair. His Ph.D., from the University of Colorado, is in astrophysics—the study of the atmospheres of the sun, the planets, and the solar system—but his current interest is a portion of the earth's atmosphere: specifically, the rotational storms of "Tornado Alley."

In this belt, which runs diagonally across north Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and southern Iowa, there are more tor-

nadoes than anywhere else on earth. Every spring, the region is filled with cold, dry air flowing down from the Rockies, and hot, moist air flowing up from the Gulf of Mexico. The collision of these air masses produces fierce thunderstorms. The jet stream—that river of air flowing across the country from west to east—also has a part to play. As the storms build to high altitudes, the jet helps to send them into rotation, increasing their ferocity. With the progression of spring, the jet shifts to the north, and the northern end of Tornado Alley gets busier as a result.

The National Severe Storms Laboratory sits in the middle of the Alley. It is a modern glass-and-concrete building on the grounds of the Norman airport. A hundred yards away is the white dome of a Doppler radar, which is on loan from the Air Force. Formerly the device stood somewhere above the Arctic Circle, where it looked for Soviet missiles coming over the North Pole. Now it looks for tornado vortex signature (the radar echo of tornadoes) in thunderstorms over Oklahoma. Because it can measure the velocity of objects moving toward or away from it, the Doppler can "see" all sorts of storm phenomena—such as updrafts, downdrafts, and mesocyclone rotation—invisible to ordinary radar. So sensitive is the Doppler that it sometimes detects flying insects at a distance of sixty miles.

Inside the laboratory, the walls of the corridors are covered with photographs of tornadoes in many shapes and colors. They look like cones, tubes, and ropes; they are gray, blue, and pastel pink. This last color results either from dirt that has been sucked up into the funnel or from the reflection of light on the funnel from the ground. One supple mauve funnel, which was photographed near Cordell, Oklahoma, looks exactly like the tornado in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. I mentioned the resemblance to Davies-Jones, as we walked the corridors of the laboratory the day before the intercept. He said, "The storm in that movie was a pretty good simulation of a tornado, although they don't move from side to side like that until they're in the last stages." He pointed to the photograph. "I was right down that road, trying to plant recording devices on those fence posts, and Eric was somewhere over there, trying to get a sound recording." The positions he indicated looked uncomfortably close.

Davies-Jones showed me a steel cylinder loaded with devices for recording pressure and wind velocity, which one of the intercept vehicles tries to drop in the path of the tornado. Appropriately enough, it is called "Toto." Deploying Toto is a risky job, but so far there has been no shortage of takers. Meteorologists are enthralled by tornadoes, and few would pass up an opportunity to chase one.

The idea of intercepting tornadoes is not new. Scientists once proposed driving through a funnel in a surplus army tank, but they soon abandoned the idea. Tornadoes can travel as fast as 60 miles per hour, and even if a tank could catch up to one, it seemed likely to do a lot of property damage in the attempt. There was another problem: the power of tornadoes. When a tornado crossed the Norman airport a few years ago, it was observed that the nine-ton armored

personnel carriers that the National Guard had parked there were thrown around like footballs.

More than ten years ago, meteorology students at the University of Oklahoma began trying to intercept tornadoes in fast four-wheel-drive vehicles. Davies-Jones wrote, in *Thunderstorms*, a book published by the government, that "Tornado 'chasing' quickly became the favorite pastime of a few meteorology students, fascinated by the sublime appearance and coherent structure of rotational storms." The students' methods proved so successful that they have been used ever since. The tornado-intercept project began officially in 1972. Today, the laboratory owns several vehicles, which range great distances over Texas and Oklahoma. The terrain—largely empty and covered by a grid of section-line roads—is ideal for pursuing tornadoes.

But really, I asked Rasmussen the first time I met him, aren't these intercepts dangerous? "Not if you know what you're doing," he said, although he added that he discourages people who don't from trying. "As long as you stay out of the inflow, you're all right. You're in more danger of getting struck by lightning."

"Lightning?"

"Last year, five of us who were observing a storm were struck by lightning."

He described the sensation as a loud pop directly overhead and then something knocking his feet out from under him. When he got up, he couldn't see the others, and thought they were dead. "That was a bad moment," he told me. All five survived becoming human lightning rods, but they had headaches for hours afterward.

Nobody has yet been killed on a tornado intercept. Nevertheless, I had to sign a release form before I was allowed to go along. In the laboratory's library, I discovered an old intercept tape that made me think that Rasmussen had played down the risks. At one point on the tape, the commentator said:

We're getting closed in now . . . several lowerings in motion . . . My God . . . this is it . . . [Mike noise.] . . . John, this thing's becoming a tornado! [More mike noise.] It seems to be moving away from us! I think we're safe here! What's our position? [Shouting:] This thing is a monster, absolutely a monster! God, I haven't even noticed the time. Right now, it's . . . [Hysterical laughter.] Watch out, we're getting another lowering! [Tornadic sound.] Stop! I'm trying not to go to pieces here. . . . Oooh, this is getting . . . That one was right on top of us!

MANY AMERICANS THINK OF TORNADOES AS A VERY minor sort of catastrophe, which at worst could destroy a barn or two in Kansas. Yet tornadoes occur in every state, and they are not always so minor. For example, the tornado that struck Wichita Falls, Texas—my home town—on April 10, 1979, at times reached a mile in diameter; it destroyed or damaged almost one fourth of the town's buildings. On April 3, 1974, more than 140 tornadoes struck thirteen states east of the Mississippi. They

killed 315 people and did more than half a billion dollars' worth of property damage.

Forecasting tornadoes is a great deal more difficult than one might think. The country's weather reports are based on models generated twice a day by a computer operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in Maryland. This computer, a Cyber 205, has a 2-million-word memory and processes, on the average, 80 million instructions a second. It cannot, however, resolve data on the scale that would be necessary to predict the evolution of the individual thunderstorms in which tornadoes are born.

The information on which the models are based is incomplete, in any case. Satellite instruments provide information about atmospheric temperature and wind, but they are less useful when it comes to pressure and humidity—two other important variables of large weather systems. These measurements are obtained, as they have been for decades, chiefly by aircraft, weather balloons, and ground observers. Doppler radar, which is subtle enough to detect the moisture content and movements of air, could provide this information, as a federal program called NEXRAD, for "next-generation weather radar," has proved. But the use of Doppler radar on a large scale is still some years in the future.

Because of these technical obstacles, the likelihood of tornadoes cannot be predicted more than a few hours in advance. However, a few hours can be a significant advantage. Through close visual observation, the meteorologists of the tornado-intercept project have learned a great deal about the structure of tornadic thunderstorms and the conditions likely to produce them. On a bad day in Tornado Alley, radar operators and civilian spotters can identify potentially dangerous storms more easily than ever before and alert the population.

Since the National Weather Service began issuing warnings, in the early 1950s, the death toll from tornadoes has been steadily dropping. Although the tornadoes that struck Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa on March 18, 1925, were confined for the most part to sparsely populated areas, 746 people died. In comparison, it is estimated that of the 20,000 people in the path of the Wichita Falls tornado, fifty died. The more that meteorologists at Norman and other NOAA research facilities learn, the earlier these warnings can be issued.

The best place to wait out a tornado is in an underground shelter. A bathroom is second best. (The pipes in the walls seem to help keep the bathroom intact even if the rest of the house disintegrates.) Some people try to flee in cars, which is not a good idea, because the velocity of tornadic winds turns cars into flying missiles. Most of the people killed in the Wichita Falls tornado were in cars. They were locked helpless in traffic jams and overtaken. As one pickup rolled across the ground, a man tried to hold on to his wife. The suction pulled her out the window as a passenger might be pulled through the porthole of an airliner. Her body was found on a roof some distance away.

A few very fortunate people have gone aloft in tornadoes and survived. During an earlier tornado in Wichita Falls, a man was blown out of his exploding house. Like Dorothy, he glimpsed others in the funnel. A house trailer rotated near him, and in the window he could see the terrified face of one of his neighbors. (She did not survive.) Flying ahead of him was a mattress. If I could reach that, he thought, I'd just go to sleep. He then lost consciousness and woke on the ground, wrapped in barbed wire. Flying splinters had made a pincushion of his body.

I was eight when I saw my first tornado. My mother and I were driving across Texas, and my father was following in another car. A funnel crossed the road between us, almost blowing my father into the ditch. For years since, in times of stress, I have had the same nightmare. It begins with me at home, in my parents' house in Wichita Falls, when the sky goes black. Looking out the window, I see, in a flash of lightning, the gray pencil of a tornado headed in my direction.

On the night before the intercept, I must have been more apprehensive than I realized. The moment I fell asleep, this nightmare came back to me.

AT 5 P.M., WE'VE REACHED THE AREA WHERE RASMUSSEN thinks our storm should be, just north of where the Panhandle joins the rest of Texas: more featureless ranch country, crisscrossed by blacktop roads. Since we are no longer in communication with Norman, Burgess tries the local stations, but all he can get is Paul Harvey, George Jones singing about lost love, and the price of beef. Worse, the antenna is coming loose, so what we do hear is punctuated by static. Somewhere out here are two other parties—the team that deploys Toto, and another team from the University of Oklahoma—but we haven't heard from either.

When Burgess stops for gas in the town of Wellington, the attendant glances suspiciously at our government plates. "Looks like we might have a tornado today," he says. Burgess, who was born in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, knows how to make filling-station conversation. "Yep," he says. "You sure might."

While Rasmussen tries to get Norman on the pay phone, Davies-Jones stands in the road, clocking the speed of wind gusts with his hand-held anemometer. Burgess buys a Dr. Pepper and takes out his credit card.

Just then, a high-pitched tone cuts through the static on the radio. "This is a NOAA weather alert," an announcer says. "A tornado has been reported on the ground near Childress. All residents of Childress, Harmon, and Greer counties should take shelter immediately."

Instantly, everyone is back in the vehicle; Childress is only thirty miles away. "Where y'all headed in that rig?" the attendant says.

"Going to catch that sucker," Burgess tells him, as we pull out.

We head south on a blacktop, driving fast but not too fast;

intercept vehicles have been stopped by the highway patrol for speeding. "Boy, does this bring back memories," Rasmussen says. He has intercepted other tornadoes on this very road.

Now the overcast is clearing, and I can see the storm ahead. So solid does the cumulonimbus look, like a great white-hot mountain, that I have difficulty believing that it is really an intricate structure of circulating air.

In an ordinary thunderstorm, falling rain chokes off the core of rising hot air, and the storm dies of suffocation. But this storm is what meteorologists call a "supercell." It towers so high that it has punched right through the jet stream to the edge of the stratosphere. As the storm is pushed forward on the jet, rain falls *ahead* of the rising hot air. Instead of being suffocated, this type of storm can sustain itself for hours, building up the energy necessary to produce a tornado. The tornado almost always appears on the southeast corner of such a storm, behind the precipitation shaft. Approaching as we are, through the precipitation shaft, is slightly dangerous. Blinded by rain, we could come out right in the funnel's path. Most of the close calls on intercepts have happened this way.

"Precip," Burgess says, as the first drops strike the windshield. The rain gets heavier, until nothing can be seen but the headlights of an approaching car. Now we can hear hail rattling on the roof—possibly a sign of a tornado nearby. "Time is now about seventeen-o-six," Davies-Jones says for the log. "We're in about marble-sized hail, coming down very fast, in a very heavy core south of Wellington. Rain seems to be lightening up ahead . . . We're breaking out!"

UNDER THE STORM, IT'S VERY DARK. A DENSE BLACK ceiling stretches away for miles. Only to the southeast does a little sunlight seep in. Hanging directly over the road ahead—so low that it almost touches the ground—is a wall cloud. Burgess creeps slowly to a stop, and the meteorologists leap out. Very reluctantly, I follow them. Although I don't see a funnel, it appears that one is going to form at any second. The air is absolutely still. "Looks like the real action's about ten miles to the west," Rasmussen is saying.

Since we're not leaving, I force myself to look at my surroundings. The fields on either side of the road are covered with hail. Fog hangs over them in a motionless layer. I try to take pictures, but I'm so frightened that my fingers are numb. The wall cloud is glowing with a grayish-pink light; it goes up and down in great gobs, like a lava lamp.

To my great relief, everyone decides that it's time to go. We get back in the vehicle and head southeast, moving parallel to the storm and trying to find a point from which we can photograph.

Tornadoes usually don't last very long—when they form, they begin pulling in rain and cold air from the nearby precipitation shaft, and are soon extinguished—but they may form several times along the path of a storm. The



mouth of a funnel is often composed of smaller, multiple vortices. And the path of the spinning funnel follows the rim of an even larger vortex—the mesocyclone.

No one knows for certain what sets off a tornado. Davies-Jones believes that cold air spilling off the rear of a storm—a phenomenon known as rear-flank downdraft—in some way intensifies its circulation. This cold air erodes the back of the storm, opening a slot of clear sky between the cloud base and the ground which tends to appear just before a tornado does.

Off to our left, the wall cloud is consolidating. “Looking better all the time,” Davies-Jones says. It’s rotating, and a bell-shaped lowering is developing on the leading edge. “It’s going to go,” Rasmussen shouts. “Left, left!”

Burgess turns north, trying to get closer to the path of the tornado before it touches down. It’s still in the air, but I can see fingers of dust rising from the fields below. “Stop!”

Rasmussen yells. He leaps out and starts unloading the camera, and I hear Davies-Jones cry, “Tornado on the ground, seventeen-thirty!”

The tornado is coming toward us on a diagonal, and it looks as if it’s going to cross the road less than a mile ahead. Sure enough, a slot of clear sky has opened behind it. Silhouetted against this, the tornado looks almost as if it were onstage. I line up a telephone pole with the left side of the funnel. If the tornado moves to the left of that pole, it’s headed in our direction. Somebody has got to keep an eye on things: the meteorologists are totally absorbed in their filming.

The mouth of the funnel looks less like air than like some dense black fluid, which, at this speed (probably 150 miles per hour), for all practical purposes it is. Rasmussen is shouting observations as he operates the movie camera. “Tornado on the ground . . . big tornado . . . I can see mul-



multiple vortices." Jets of dust leap up at the mouth of the funnel and scissor around it, so that it looks like an enormous DNA helix. Larger than any moving thing should be, still it glides along in an impossible silence.

At this point, I feel a profound admiration for the meteorologists—especially Rasmussen, who led us hundreds of miles to this tornado, on a trip that started before the parent storm was even born. I also appreciate why they do this; the tornado is simply the most spectacular thing I've ever seen. This is a moment of clarity—a clarity so great that it is euphoric—in which I glimpse forces operating on a scale beyond any I can ordinarily imagine. On this scale I am nothing; and when the funnel comes so close that it fills the lens of my camera, I let the camera drop and just stare, feeling helpless as a child.

In the instant before the funnel crosses the road, it lifts. I notice the University of Oklahoma vehicle on the road

ahead of us. That team has gotten here, too, and is even closer than we are. "Rain curtain," Rasmussen shouts, and a moving drapery of rain wraps around the funnel and obliterates it.

"Dad gum," Burgess says, disappointed. We get back into the Chevy, he throws it into gear, and we take off.

FOR THE NEXT THIRTY MINUTES, BURGESS FOLLOWS the storm to the northeast along dirt roads, trying to catch it before the tornado can form again. Let's not get too close, I'm thinking; let's not get carried away! At one point, the tumbleweeds on either side of the road go flying straight up in the air. It's only what Davies-Jones calls a "gustnado" (a minor vortex), but for a moment it produces the convincing illusion that a funnel is forming directly over our heads.

At another point, the clouds are torn apart and a great shaft of sunlight pours down. It's another clear slot opening up. Ahead, where the rear-flank downdraft is hitting the ground, gales of red dust are blowing across the fields. This cold air, fresh from the edge of the stratosphere, is so dense that it falls at a hundred feet a second or more. An aircraft flying through a downdraft like this would lose lift and plunge to the ground.

Another funnel does touch down, but it dissipates before we can take any pictures. Seeing the highway patrol ahead, Burgess slows and tells the officers that they'd better radio the town of Mangum, which is right in the path of the storm. Moments later, we meet a motorcycle gang on big Harley choppers, but by this time I've lost my capacity for surprise.

Finally, we reach a highway and get out from under the storm. On a hilltop just north of the Red River we pull off for a look, followed by the University of Oklahoma team and by Howard Bluestein, a meteorologist who's driving the Dodge pickup that deploys Toto. All three teams—though they have been traveling separately and without radio contact—not only have picked the same storm but have managed to join up on the same stretch of highway. Any doubt I might have had about the ability of these tornado chasers disappears. They are more expert than I would have believed possible.

Davies-Jones stares up at the storm, which eclipses the sun. "A very impressive animal," he says.

He is right. By looking straight up, I can see the very top of the cumulonimbus. (Later, I learn that the core is almost 60,000 feet high—more than twice as high as the highest mountain on earth—and that together with the anvil it covers an area almost as large as the state of Rhode Island.) Although it's moving too slowly for me to see this, the whole cumulonimbus is in slow cyclonic (counterclockwise) rotation, pushed along by the jet and by today's strong northeasterly winds. Also helping is the coriolis force, a response to the rotation of the earth. This is the same force that makes almost every vortex in the Northern Hemisphere—from hurricanes to the water in bathtub drains—rotate to the left. And this storm is on the edge of an area of low atmospheric pressure covering the entire state of Oklahoma—a low that is also in cyclonic rotation.

The cumulonimbus is sublimely beautiful, from the golden scallops of its main storm tower to the deep-blue knife edge of its base. Long gray scrolls, which Davies-Jones tells me are "laminar inflow bands," curve into the region of the mesocyclone. The wall cloud rotates, silhouetted against dull reddish-gold sunlight shining through under the storm. To the north, the precipitation shaft looks like a great spill of India ink. We can see nothing but blackness in that direction, and it reminds me of my old nightmare. In the foreground, as if a painter had composed the whole picture, a frightened horse runs in circles around a yellow field. To the northeast, on another hill, is the town of Mangum, and as I look in that direction, I hear the sirens blow.

WHEN A TORNADO STRIKES A TOWN, PEOPLE ARE subjected to strange and violent experiences that nothing in their lives could have prepared them for. They are rarely the same afterward.

Dennis Spruill, who was then the city editor of the *Wichita Falls Times*, was at home taking a nap when the tornado of 1979 approached. The sirens woke him at 6:00, and he heard a television announcer say, "A tornado is on the ground near Ponderosa Estates." Then the power went off. Spruill lived near Ponderosa Estates. He was strongly tempted to go to his wife, who was working at a bank five blocks away, but he decided to follow the safety rules recently published in the paper and went into the bathroom, taking their dog with him.

For a long time, as he crouched there in the darkness, between the toilet and the bathtub, nothing happened. Then he heard a sound he describes as "the sound of pure energy—a lot of power." It reminded him of a turbine that he had once heard on a visit to the city power station. The house began to rock. The air got cold. Looking up, he saw that the roof had become detached and was hovering a few feet above the house. Then it disintegrated, and the air was filled with flying boards. The water in the toilet boiled—he couldn't believe his eyes—and shot skyward like soda from a siphon. Spruill clung to the toilet for dear life. The tornado was trying to pull him out of the house.

Another Wichita Falls man, Robert Campbell, did just what he shouldn't have done that day: tried to escape the tornado in his car. Campbell, who is in the oil business, drove his Lincoln Continental to a nearby golf course, thinking that there he would have room to outrun it. Two of his neighbors had the same idea. Parked alongside each other, they watched the tornado approach for several minutes. Campbell says, "That tornado had all the room in the world, but somehow it kept coming right in our direction." Suddenly Campbell decided that it was getting too close, and drove off across the fairway. His neighbors thought it might still miss them and stayed. One was killed.

Campbell drove off the golf course and stopped. He remembered something about opening windows in a tornado, and began pressing buttons. The windshield cracked and then soundlessly disintegrated, the fragments flying outward. Campbell crawled under the dashboard. (He is six feet four, and I asked him how he managed to fit into so small a space. "Hell," he told me, "I could have crawled in the glove compartment.") Then the rocking of the car changed to a smoother motion—"like a boat on a river"—and Campbell felt the car leave the ground.

In his bathroom, Spruill was "thinking clear as day: this is how I'm going to get it—killed by a flying board." The air was full of them; he could feel them hitting him. Opening his eyes, he saw one—"a horrible-looking piece of wood," Spruill says—come flying in and ricochet around the room. Its splintered tip pierced the door like an arrow, knocking it off its hinges. He closed his eyes again and held his dog, who was biting him so hard that he finally had to let her go. She simply disappeared. There was a moment of

BABY ANGELS

This one from the iron lung,
 this one from the tornado,
 this one was never born:
 I look at the Christian names
 of the children on the tombstones
 in the cemetery at Buena Vista,
 sweet meadow rolling
 to sheep, green lawns, and corn.
 You go there if nothing
 else is happening in your life.
 You go there if you own a plot
 to see how the grounds hold up.
 When I see the baby angels,
 why do I think of vaccination day,
 that long uneasy line, and always
 the girl with thick glasses
 crying on her fat brother's arm.
 Part Cupid because they are intentional,
 part Bacchus because they are frivolous,
 the baby angels have trained
 the cotton-mouthed mad dogs.
 They own barrels of rusty nails,
 rectangular country ponds
 and their clouds of dark gnats.
 And clearly, these children are here
 for a reason. Some could not keep
 their mouths shut. Their tongues
 entered the infectious pencil grooves,
 lapping up the beautiful names
 of diseases. This one fell from a mule.
 This one did not wear her galoshes.
 All, on occasion, ignored the warnings
 so the baby angels are all theirs now.
 Fat with a grief that is distant
 as they are faded, wings
 spread for a wind strong enough
 to lift them, they blurt out
 a little water into the marble cups
 of their hands and stare
 with hard eyes over the pointless view.

—Rodney Jones

stillness, in the eye of the tornado. Then the other side of
 the funnel hit, and again the air was full of flying boards.
 Later, Spruill's body turned black and blue, but somehow,
 of all these boards, not one hit him point-first.

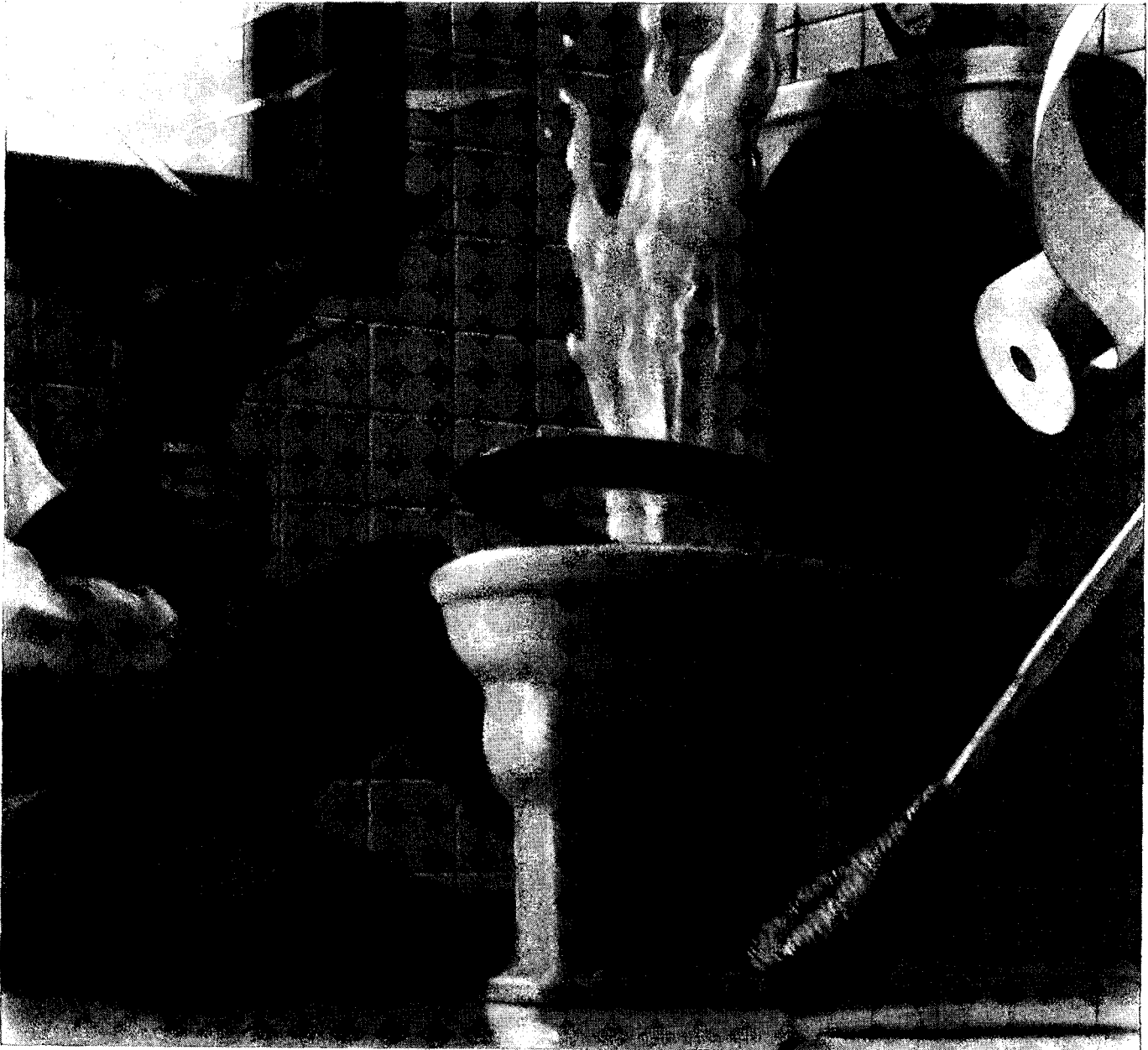
On his hands and knees, he crawled out of the house.
 The bathroom was the only part left standing. "Everything
 you knew was a landmark from your neighborhood was in-
 distinguishable. I thought the whole town was destroyed."
 He found his dog on what was left of the closet shelf. Her
 eyes were packed with dirt, shingle dust, and blood, but
 she was alive. Then he thought of his wife. Carrying the
 dog under his arm, he started for the bank. He met others
 on the way, just emerging from the debris. Spruill says,
 "They had a look in their eyes that wasn't coherent. That
 look of total shock is what stuck in my mind afterward." He
 remembers one man's face wrapped in a bloody pillowcase.
 The neighborhood looked like a garbage dump. Pipes were
 sticking up out of heaps of boards. Trees were still stand-
 ing, but they were stripped of leaves and bark, giving the
 ruins a strange, wintry look. As he got to the bank, which he
 had trouble finding, the sun came out. His wife and the
 other employees were just emerging from the vault.

Campbell, aloft in his car, had trouble breathing. The air
 was full of dirt. He told me later, "What you can't realize
 about a tornado is that they're filthy, absolutely filthy." Fi-
 nally, the car came back to earth, hundreds of yards from
 where he had stopped. The whole interior, except for the
 space under the dashboard, was full of lumber that had
 been driven in through the windows. The Continental was
 totaled. With some difficulty, he climbed out. He got a
 flashlight out of the car and, with other survivors, began
 trying to help people. He remembers seeing two women
 lying on the ground, one of them dead. They had tried to
 hide in a culvert, but the wind had blasted them out. Their
 bodies were covered with lacerations. On the road along-
 side the golf course, cars began to pass slowly, "full of the
 kind of people who hang around accidents. They were hav-
 ing a good look. It wasn't a pleasant feeling."

Finally, Campbell gave his flashlight to a policeman and
 started for his office downtown, four miles away. By this
 time, it was dark and there was no power anywhere in the
 city. Helicopters circled, their halogen searchlights stab-
 bing down. When he tried to hitchhike, nobody would give
 him a ride. The janitor let him into his office, where he had
 a couch to sleep on and a bottle of drinking water. "Man,
 this is okay," he thought.

The next morning there was a dust storm, and the sky
 was red-orange and dirty. He collected what clothes were
 left in the ruins of his apartment and took them to the
 cleaners; then he got a room at the Trade Winds Motel.
 There he met a lot of old friends—people he hadn't seen
 since high school—but they didn't have much to say to
 each other. "After three or four days of this," he says, "I
 realized I didn't have a car."

To keep from hanging around the motel, he went to his
 office, but nobody was working. Time stood still. One good
 thing: Campbell had been going through a difficult divorce,



with his wife's lawyers trying to serve him with subpoenas every day; he no longer had to worry about those. When he got sick of eating at cafeterias, he bought a hot plate and steamed vegetables in his room. "I was getting real healthy," he says.

He noticed lots of strangers in town—"the sort of trashy people who follow disasters . . . people who couldn't hold a job anyplace else." Several survivors of the Wichita Falls tornado told me afterward that the town seemed to have been taken over by strangers. A great number of outsiders did arrive in Wichita Falls—among them "contractors" who accepted money to rebuild homes and then disappeared.

After a week, Campbell realized that although he didn't have a car, he had an airplane and could go anywhere he pleased. He'd been thinking about a hotel in Port Isabel, on the Gulf, where he and his wife and kids had gone in better days.

Fortunately, Spruill's children were out of town. Spruill and his wife spent their first night in the home of people they didn't even know: the parents of a woman who worked at the bank. Spruill went down to his office to file a story, but the paper couldn't be printed without power. For three days, he forgot to eat. Then the children returned and the whole family moved in with relatives in a nearby town. This was the beginning of "a nomad existence." The Spruills, too, ended up at the Trade Winds, the four of them living for a month in a single room. Vice-President Mondale came to Wichita Falls, and the federal government declared the city a disaster area. Hundreds of trailers were moved in for the homeless. The Spruills could have gotten one, but Dennis was afraid; he had seen what the tornado had done to their brick house. There were several more tornado alerts that month, and each time, Spruill found that he couldn't leave the television. The dog was



still recovering, and he spent a fortune on veterinary bills. It seemed really important to keep that dog alive. After a while, Spruill began to have nightmares—not about the tornado, but about a great Civil War battle involving all of his friends, at which he was a powerless spectator. These nightmares went on for a year.

Campbell found the hotel at Port Isabel a little the worse for wear, but very much to his liking. He walked the beach a lot and spoke to no one—just stopped thinking altogether.

The Wichita Falls tornado destroyed more than 2,500 homes. People who were alone seemed to suffer the most, psychologically. In the following year, the number of suicides rose and the number of applications for divorce fell. One elderly woman told a reporter that she and her husband had survived the tornado by getting into their bathtub. She said, "That's the first time I've been able to get him in a bathtub with me in forty years."

WE FOLLOW THE STORM ACROSS THE QUARTZ Mountains, a very old and eroded range of granite hills, which are glowing as if with their own gray light against the black precipitation shaft. By now the time is 7:15, and it's getting very dark. My heart is thudding and my mouth is dry. A simple fear of the dark is coming back to me. When, at the town of Lone Wolf, we turn north, heading back under the storm, I feel as if I were going down into my grandmother's cellar to confront some childhood terror.

As we creep along the slippery dirt road (rain has fallen here) the meteorologists stare upward at funnels trying to form. Davies-Jones says, "They look like funnels for a brief time, but they keep dissipating again after a few seconds."

"Still got a nice clear slot."

"Problem is, rain is wrapped around the circulation, just as it's been with all the other ones we've seen today."

Ahead is a darkened farmhouse, ghostly in the nightmarish light. Every living thing except us seems to have disappeared, probably into shelter. The vehicle slithers from side to side. As we turn to the right in front of the farmhouse, the wheels break loose and we're half in the ditch.

Suddenly a gust slams into the side of the vehicle. Looking to the left, I see a big gray funnel dropping down behind the farmhouse. The sound is higher-pitched than I expected, like the hollow roar of an enormous seashell. Davies-Jones is holding the recorder out the window, trying to get it on tape (analysis of the frequency of the sound can give tornadic wind velocity). "Oh, boy, this one has got to go big," Rasmussen is saying. Scraps of cloud are shooting toward the mouth of the funnel and the vehicle is rocking. . . .

"Fragmented."

"Yeah, it's gone."

I'm still hyperventilating, all too aware that escape, if it had come to that, would have been impossible. Burgess calls Toto, somewhere ahead of us. "Still got rapid rotation here, but the big funnel we had a moment ago is gone."

"Nothing on the ground right now?" Bluestein asks.

"That's a roger, I don't think it hit the ground."

Burgess eases the vehicle back onto the road. I'm wondering why the meteorologists can't give it up. By now there is less light, if that is possible. As we turn north on a blacktop, looking for Toto, Rasmussen says, "Looks like we've got another funnel trying to form behind us. Let's not forget about that."

The sky is split by discharges of cloud-to-ground lightning. Rain descends like smoke, blotting out the last of the light. The mission is over. Burgess pulls off the road and we sit there in the dark, listening to hailstones click on the roof.

Yet after a few minutes, it becomes clear that the storm is not dying down. "Golly," Burgess says, "I can't ever remember hail going on this long." I'm leaning away from the window, afraid that it will shatter. The hailstones are bigger than golf balls. Rasmussen opens the door and picks one up. Breaking it open, he holds it under his flashlight, and I see that it is composed of concentric layers of ice, cloudy alternating with clear.

Suddenly, the wind gusts around from the southwest to the northeast, and the meteorologists look at each other alertly. This could mean that another tornado has formed behind us and that we are in its path. There are two other indications of danger to watch out for: larger hailstones and a sudden drop in pressure. Almost at once, the hail does get larger. Bluestein comes through on the radio and reports that he's getting "near-baseball." A moment later, so are we. "Oh, damn," Davies-Jones says, laughing nervously.

Holding his anemometer out the window, he clocks a gust of 60 knots.

"What have you got on your barometer, Eric?"

Rasmussen is shining his flashlight on the dial. "Just dropped two millibars in the last minute."

When I look at Rasmussen, his eyes are as black as buttons, and I see that for once the meteorologists are just as frightened as I am.

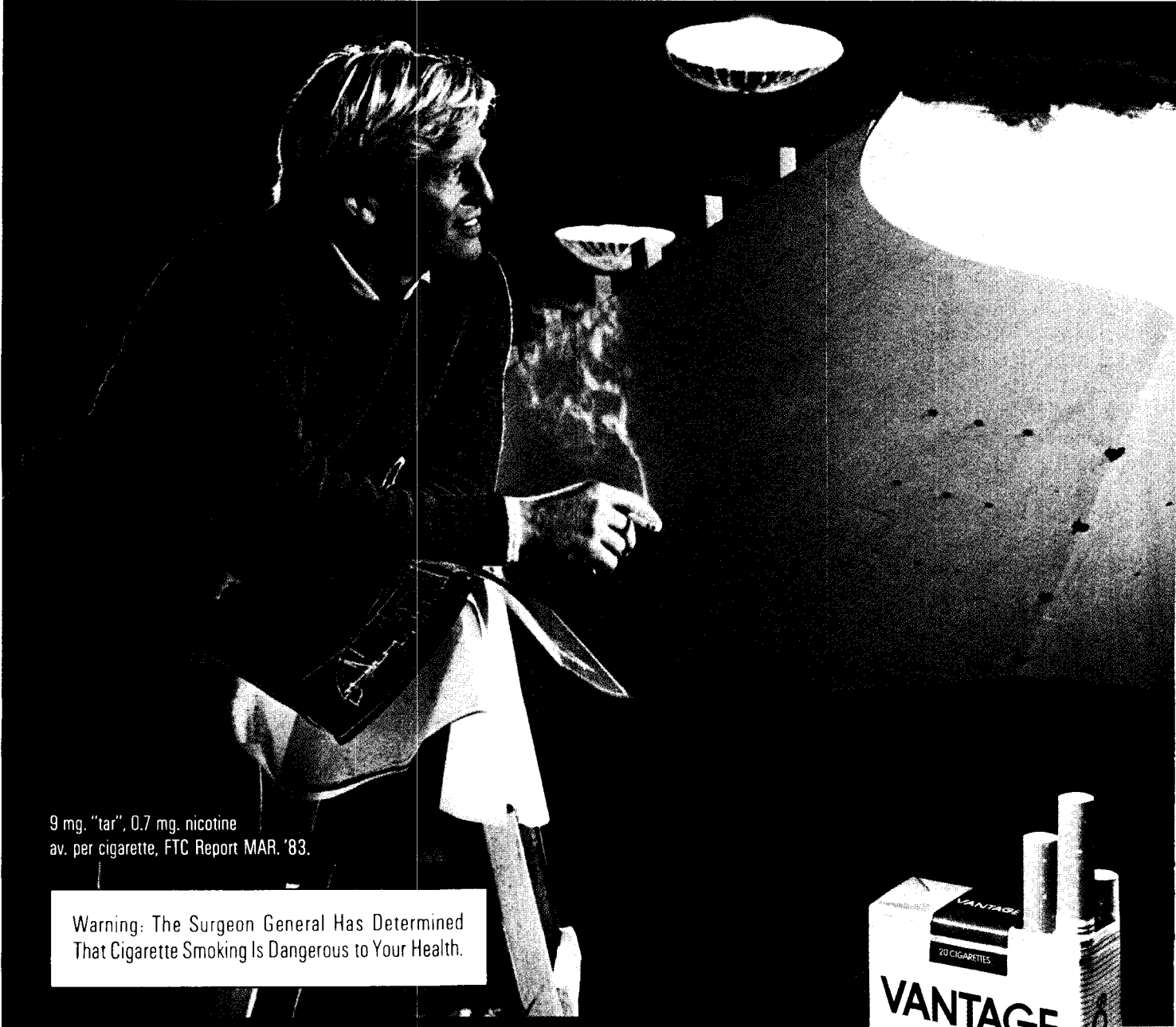
Burgess has Toto on the radio, and they're talking about everyone's getting out and going for the ditch. I know that staying in the vehicle is the worst thing to do in a situation like this, but I don't know if I can leave. "All right," Davies-Jones says, for the log. "Visibility's down to zero zero. There's another storm behind us, so we'd better watch it. We're getting strong wind out of the northeast, maybe 60 knots; and the van is starting to rock." I can't help but think that this sounds like the in-flight recording of an airline pilot just before he crashes.

LATER, DAVIES-JONES TELLS ME THAT YOU CAN GET sudden pressure drops in the core of a collapsing thunderstorm. Or perhaps there was another tornado nearby. In any case, the hail stops and the wind gradually dies. Burgess is able to inch forward until we see Bluestein and his team loading Toto back on the pickup.

The next town, Sentinel, is dark. There is no power anywhere until we reach Highway 35, where we go into a big truck stop full of excited people. The storm tonight has destroyed the wheat crop for hundreds of square miles around. The meteorologists sit at a formica table, under a painting that I've seen in truck stops before of Jesus hovering protectively over a trucker as he pushes his rig down a sinister road.

The other customers listen to the conversation of the meteorologists for a moment, decide to ignore it, and turn away. They remind me of some people in Wichita Falls who, when I told them about the tornado-intercept project, thought the idea was ridiculous. Several said that tornadoes are "acts of God" and can therefore never be understood.

The meteorologists would find this attitude as incomprehensible as their conversation seems to be to the truckers. They talk endlessly, attempting to clarify in scientific terms what we've seen. Davies-Jones is particularly excited by the appearance of a clear slot every time a funnel formed: more evidence of the importance of rear-flank downdraft. The next step is to compile the data—film footage, transcripts of the tape-recorded visual observations, and Doppler-radar pictures—into a profile of the storm. This profile will be compared with others, in a process that might eventually impose order on the day's apparent chaos. □



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A Short Story

3

WILLI

BY E. L. DOCTOROW

ONE SPRING DAY I WALKED IN the meadow behind the barn and felt rising around me the exhalations of the field, the moist sweetness of the grasses, and I imagined the earth's soul lifting to the warmth of the sun and mingling me in some divine embrace. There was such brilliant conviction in the colors of the golden hay meadow, the blue sky, that I could not help laughing. I threw myself down in the grass and spread my arms. I fell at once into a trance and yet remained incredibly aware, so that whatever I opened my eyes to look at I did not merely see but felt as my existence. Such states come naturally to children. I was resonant with the hum of the universe; I was made indistinguishable from the world in a great bonding of natural revelation. I saw the drowse of gnats weaving between the grasses and leaving infinitesimally fine threads of shimmering net, so highly textured that the breath of the soil below lifted it in gentle billows. Minute crawling life on the stalks of hay made colossal odyssey, journeys of a lifetime before my eyes. Yet there was no thought of miracle, of the miracle of microscopic sentience. The scale of the universe was not pertinent, and the smallest expressions of energy were in proportion to the sun, which lay like an Egyptian eye between the stalks and lit them as it lights the earth, by halves. The hay had fallen under me, so that my own body's outline was patterned on the field, the outspread legs and arms, the fingers, and I was aware of my being as the arbitrary shape of an agency that had chosen to make me in this manner as a means of communicating with me. The very idea of a head and limbs and a body was substantive only as an act of communication, and I felt myself in



the prickle of the flattened grass, and the sense of imposition was now enormous, a prodding, a lifting of this part of the world that was for some reason my momentary responsibility, that was giving me possession of itself. And I rose and seemed to ride on the planes of the sun, which I felt in fine striations, alternated with thin lines of the earth's moist essences. And invisibly by my revelation I reached the barn and examined the face of it, standing with my face in the painted whiteness of its glare as a dog or a cat stands nose to a door until someone comes and lets it out. And I moved along the white barn wall, sidestepping until I came to the window, which was a simple square without glass and could only be felt by the geometrical coolness of its volume of inner air, for it was black within. And there I stood, as if in the mouth of a vacuum, and felt the insubstantial being of the sun meadow pulled past me into the barn, like a torrential implosion of light into darkness and life into death, and I

myself too disintegrated in that force and was sucked like the chaff of the field in that roaring. Yet I stood where I was. And in quite normal spatial relationship with my surroundings felt the sun's quiet warmth on my back and the coolness of the cool barn on my face. And the windy universal roar in my ears had narrowed and refined itself to a recognizable frequency, that of a woman's pulsating song in the act of love, the gasp and note and gasp and note of an ecstatic score. I listened. And facing the darkness and pressed upon by the sun, as if it were a hand on the back of my neck, I moved into the portal of the cool darkness, and no longer blinded by the sunlight I saw on the straw and in the dung my mother, denuded, in a pose of utmost degradation, a body, a reddened headless body, the head enshrouded in her clothing, everything turned inside out, as if blown out by the wind, all order, truth, and reason, and this de-

*E. L. Doctorow's new work of fiction, *Lives of the Poets*, will be published in the fall.*

filed mama played violently upon and being made to sing her defilement. How can I describe what I felt! I felt I deserved to see this! I felt it was my triumph, but I felt monstrously betrayed. I felt drained suddenly of the strength to stand. I turned my back and slid down the wall to a sitting position under the window. My heart in my chest banged in sickened measure of her cries. I wanted to kill him, this killer of my mother who was killing her. I wanted to leap through the window and drive a pitchfork into his back, but I wanted him to be killing her, I wanted him to be killing her for me. I wanted to be him. I lay on the ground, and

WE ALL FALL DOWN

for Kelly, my student

Her turn had come. She knew
by heart almost
the lines she was to speak
but gave us God help her

the truth
beyond the lines,
beyond the book she dropped,
its pages thrashing to the floor
like broken wings—

the truth
she beat her head upon,
bit into so hard
I could not pry her jaws,
teeth grinding—

the truth beyond us
she saw as ever,
her risen eyes gone white
as bone.

I did what I could, I
held her and held her, seized
with sudden love and knowing
we all fall down.

In the end
I carried her curled in my arms
across one threshold
and another.

—Rennie McQuilkin

with my arms over my head and my hands clasped and my ankles locked, I rolled down the slope, behind the barn through the grass and the crop of hay. I flattened the hay like a mechanical cylinder of irrepressible force rolling faster and faster over rocks, through rivulets, across furrows, and over hummocks of the uneven imperfect flawed irregular earth, the sun flashing in my closed eyes in diurnal emergency, as if time and the planet had gone out of control. As it has. (I am recalling these things now, a man older than my father when he died, and to whom a woman of my mother's age when all this happened is a young woman barely half my age. What an incredible achievement of fantasy is the scientific mind! We posit an empirical world, yet how can I be here at this desk in this room—and not be here? If memory is a matter of the stimulation of so many cells of the brain, the greater the stimulus—remorse, the recognition of fate—the more powerfully complete becomes the sensation of the memory until there is transfer, as in a time machine, and the memory is in the ontological sense another reality.) Papa, I see you now in the universe of your own making. I walk the polished floorboards of your house and seat myself at your dining table. I feel the tassels of the tablecloth on the tops of my bare knees. The light of the candelabra shines on your smiling mouth of big teeth. I notice the bulge of your neck produced by your shirt collar. Your pink scalp is visible through the close-cropped German-style haircut. I see your raised head in conversation and your plump hand of consummate gesture making its point to your wife at the other end of the table. Mama is so attentive. The candle flame burns in her eyes and I imagine the fever there, but she is quite calm and seriously engrossed by what you say. Her long neck, very white, is hung with a thin chain from which depends, on the darkness of her modest dress, a cream-colored cameo, the carved profile of another fine lady of another time. In her neck a soft slow pulse beats. Her small hands are folded and the bones of her wrists emerge from the touch of lace at her cuffs. She is smiling at you in your loving proprietorship, proud of you, pleased to be yours, and the mistress of this house, and the mother of this boy. Of my tutor across the table from me who idly twirls the stem of his wine glass and glances at her, she is barely aware. Her eyes are for her husband. I think now, Papa, her feelings in this moment are sincere. I know now each moment has its belief, what we call treachery is the belief of each moment, our wish for it to be as it seems to be. It is possible in joy to love the person you have betrayed and to be refreshed in your love for him, it is entirely possible. Love renews all faces and customs and ideals and leaves the bars of the prison shining. But how could a boy know that? I ran to my room and waited for someone to follow me. Whoever dared to enter my room I would attack—would pummel. I wanted it to be her, I wanted her to come to me, to hug me and to hold my head and kiss me on the lips as she liked to do, I wanted her to make those wordless sounds of comfort as she held me to her when I was hurt or unhappy, and when she did that I would beat her with my fists, beat her to the floor, and see her raise her hands help-

lessly in terror as I beat her and kicked her and jumped upon her and drove the breath from her body. But it was my tutor who, some time later, opened the door, looked in with his hand upon the knob, smiled, said a few words, and wished me good night. He closed the door and I heard him walk up the steps to the next floor, where he had his rooms. Ledig was his name. He was a Christian. I had looked but could not find in his face any sign of smugness or leering pride or cruelty. There was nothing coarse about him, nothing that could possibly give me offense. He was barely twenty. I even thought I saw in his eyes a measure of torment. He was habitually melancholic anyway, and during my lessons his mind often wandered and he would gaze out the window and sigh. He was as much a schoolboy as his pupil. So there was every reason to refrain from judgment, to let time pass, to think, to gain understanding. Nobody knew that I knew. I had that choice. But did I? They had made my position intolerable. I was given double vision, the kind that comes with a terrible blow. I found I could not have anything to do with my kind sweet considerate mother. I found I could not bear the gentle pedagogics of my tutor. How, in that rural isolation, could I be expected to go on? I had no friends. I was not permitted to play with the children of the peasants who worked for us. I had only this trinity of Mother and Tutor and Father, this unholy trinity of deception and ignorance who had excommunicated me from my life at the age of thirteen. This of course in the calendar of traditional Judaism is the year a boy enjoys his initiation into manhood.

Meanwhile, my father was going about the triumph of his life, running a farm according to the most modern principles of scientific management, astonishing his peasants and angering the other farmers in the region with his success. The sun brought up his crops, the Galician Agricultural Society gave him an award for the quality of his milk, and he lived in a state of consummate satisfaction of the kind given to individuals who are more than a match for the lives they have chosen for themselves. I had incorporated him into the universe of giant powers that I, a boy, experienced in the changes of the seasons. I watched bulls bred to cows, watched mares foal, I saw life come from the egg and the multiplicative wonders of mudholes and ponds, the jell and slime of life shimmering in gravid expectation. Everywhere I looked life sprang from something not life, insects

unfolded from sacs on the surface of still waters and were instantly on the prowl for their dinner, everything that came into being knew at once what to do and did it, unastonished that it was what it was, unimpressed by where it was, the great earth heaving up its bloodied newborns from every pore every cell, bearing the variousness of itself from every conceivable substance that it contained in itself, sprouting life that flew or waved in the wind or blew from the mountains or stuck to the damp black underside of rocks, or swam or suckled or bellowed or silently separated

in two. I placed my father in all of this as the owner and manager. He lived in the universe of giant powers by understanding it and making it serve him, using the daily sun for his crops and breeding what naturally bred, and so I distinguished him in it as the god-eye in the kingdom, the intelligence that brought order and gave everything its place. He loved me, and I can still feel my pleasure in making him laugh, and I might not be deceiving myself when I remember the feel on my infant hand of his unshaved cheek, the winey smell of his breath, the tobacco smoke in his thick wavy hair, or his mock-wondering look of foolish happiness during our play together. He had close-set eyes, the color of dark grapes, which opened wide in our games. He would laugh like a horse and show large white teeth. He was a strong man, stocky and powerful—the constitution I inherited—and he had emerged as an orphan from the alleys of cosmopolitan Eastern Europe, like Darwin's amphibians from the sea, and made himself a landowner, a

husband and father. He was a Jew who spoke no Yiddish and a farmer raised in the city. I was not allowed to play with village children or to go to their crude schools. We lived alone, isolated on our estate, neither Jew nor Christian, neither friend nor petitioner of the Austro-Hungarians, but in the pride of the self-constructed self. To this day I don't know how he arranged it or what hungering rage had caused him to deny every classification society imposes and to live as an anomaly, tied to no past in a world that as it happened had no future. But I am in awe that he did it. Because he stood up in his life, he was exposed to the swords of Mongol horsemen, the scythes of peasants in revolution, the lowered brows of monstrous bankers, and the cruciform gestures of prelates. His arrogance threatened him with the cumulative power of all of European history, which was ready to take his head, nail it to a pole, and turn him into



one of the scarecrows in his fields, arms held stiffly out toward life. But when the moment came for this transformation it was accomplished quite easily, by a word from his son. I was the agency of his downfall. Ancestry and myth, culture, history, and time were ironically composed in the shape of his own boy.

I WATCHED HER FOR SEVERAL DAYS. I REMEMBERED THE rash of passion on her flesh. I was so ashamed of myself that I felt continuously ill, and it was the vaguest, most diffuse nausea, nausea of the blood, nausea of the bone. In bed at night I found it difficult breathing, and terrible waves of fever broke over me and left me parched in my terror. I couldn't purge from my mind the image of her overthrown body, the broad whitenesses, her shoed feet in the air; I made her scream ecstatically every night in my dreams and awoke one dawn in my own sap. That was the crisis that toppled me, for in fear of being found out by the maid and by my mother, for fear of being found out by them all as the archcriminal of my dreams, I ran to him, I went to him for absolution, I confessed and put myself at his mercy. Papa, I said. He was down by the kennels mating a pair of vizslas. He used this breed to hunt. He had rigged some sort of harness for the bitch so that she could not bolt, a kind of pillory, and she was putting up a terrible howl, and though her tail showed her amenable, she moved her rump away from the proddings of the erect male, who mounted and pumped and missed and mounted again and couldn't hold her still. My father was banging the fist of his right hand into the palm of his left. Put it to her, he shouted, come on, get it in there, give it to her. Then the male had success and the mating began, the female standing there quietly now, sweat dripping off her chops, an occasional groan escaping from her. And then the male came and stood front paws on her back, his tongue lolling as he panted, and they waited as dogs do for the detumescence. My father kneeled beside them and soothed them with quiet words. Good dogs, he said, good dogs. You must guard them at this time, he said to me; they try to uncouple too early and hurt themselves. Papa, I said. He turned and looked at me over his shoulder as he knelt beside the dogs, and I saw his happiness, and the glory of him in his work pants tucked into a black pair of riding boots and his shirt open at the collar and the black hair of his chest curled as high as the throat, and I said, Papa, they should be named Mama and Ledig. And then I turned so quickly I do not even remember his face changing, I did not even wait to see if he understood me, I turned and ran, but I am sure of this—he never called after me.

There was a sun-room in our house, a kind of conservatory with a glass outer wall and a slanted ceiling of green glass framed in steel. It was a very luxurious appointment in that region, and it was my mother's favorite place to be. She had filled it with plants and books, and she liked to lie on a chaise in this room and read and smoke cigarettes. I found her there, as I knew I would, and I gazed at her with wonder and fascination because I knew her fate. She was incredibly beautiful, with her dark hair parted in the center and tied behind her in a bun, and her small hands, and the lovely fullness of her chin, the indications under her chin of some fattening, like a quality of indolence in her character. But a man would not dwell on this as on her neck, so lovely and slim, or the high, modestly dressed bosom. A man would not want to see signs of the future. Since she was my mother it had never occurred to me how many years younger she was than my father. He had married her out of the gymnasium; she was the eldest of four daughters and her parents had been eager to settle her in prosperous welfare, which is what a mature man offers. It is not that the parents are unaware of the erotic component for the man in this sort of marriage. They are fully aware of it. Rectitude, propriety, are always very practical. I gazed at her in wonder and awe. I blushed. What, she said. She put her book down and smiled and held out her arms. What, Willi, what is it? I fell into her arms and began to sob and she held me and my tears wet the dark dress she wore. She held my head and whispered, What, Willi, what did you do to yourself, poor Willi? Then, aware that my sobs had become breathless and hysterical, she held me at arm's length—tears and snot were dribbling from me—and her eyes widened in genuine alarm.

That night I heard from the bedroom the shocking, exciting sounds of her undoing. I have heard such terrible sounds of blows upon a body in Berlin after the war, Freikorps hoodlums in the streets attacking whores they had dragged from the brothel and tearing the clothes from their bodies and beating them to the cobblestones. I sat up in bed, hardly able to breathe, terrified, but feeling undeniable arousal. Give it to her, I muttered, banging my fist in my palm. Give it to her. But then I could bear it no longer and ran into their room and stood between them, lifting my screaming mother from the bed, holding her in my arms, shouting at my father to stop, to stop. But he reached around me and grabbed her hair with one hand and punched her face with the other. I was enraged, I pushed her back and jumped at him, pummeling him, shouting that I would kill him. This was in Galicia in the year 1910. All of it was to be destroyed anyway, even without me. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

ENRICO CARUSO AND GIACOMO PUCCINI

THE PLOT WAS NOT so much Italian opera as Hollywood musical. A young man and woman are in love. She is to star in a show; he wishes to play opposite her, but he is unknown. She challenges him to audition before the composer himself; he accepts, overrides all obstacles of protocol, and performs with such stunning artistry and style that the role is instantly his.

A familiar plot, but our lover did not look the part. He was short and tubby, with an undistinguished moustache and an undesirable Neapolitan accent. It was the composer who was handsome and debonair. What our lover did have was the optimism of youth: with all the engaging audacity of a movie hero, Enrico Caruso, desirous of singing Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, arrived unannounced one day in June, 1897, in the Tuscan village of Torre del Lago, at the house of Giacomo Puccini.

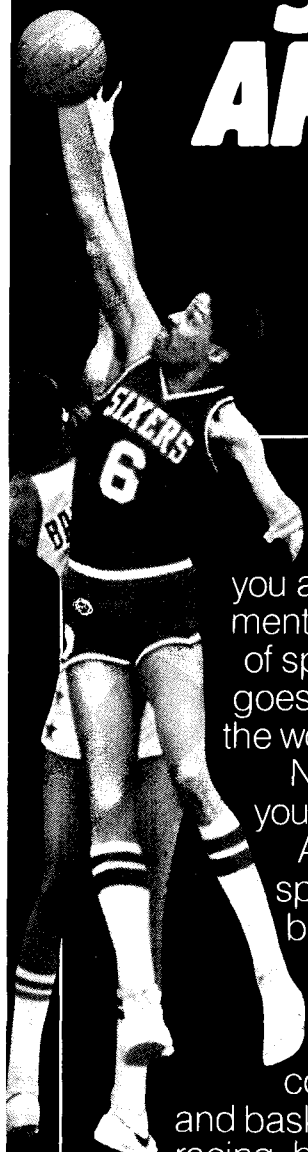
He was admitted under protest. Puccini, ultra-sensitive to cold, a wide-brimmed hat on his head, ushered him into a studio made stifling by a roaring fire. Perspiring

from heat and nervousness, Caruso asked to sing "*Che gelida manina*." Puccini obligingly sat down at the piano. It took only a few bars for the composer to realize that in tone and dramatic intensity here was the perfect—the ultimate—Rodolfo. With the final high C, Puccini spun around in genuine amazement. "Who has sent you to me?" he asked. "God?"

Caruso sang Rodolfo opposite his mistress (who would bear him two sons and then leave him for the chauffeur). He later triumphed in *Tosca* and *Madama Butterfly*. As the careers of both men rose to meteoric heights, they became warm, if sometimes wary, friends. It irked Puccini that Caruso was getting rich (\$100,000 a year) recording his (Puccini's) arias through that bell-shaped tin horn, to be sold on those scratchy waxed discs, for which Puccini as yet got nothing. He wrote to a friend that Caruso was "lazy" and "too pleased with himself." "All the same," Puccini could not help but add, "his voice is magnificent."

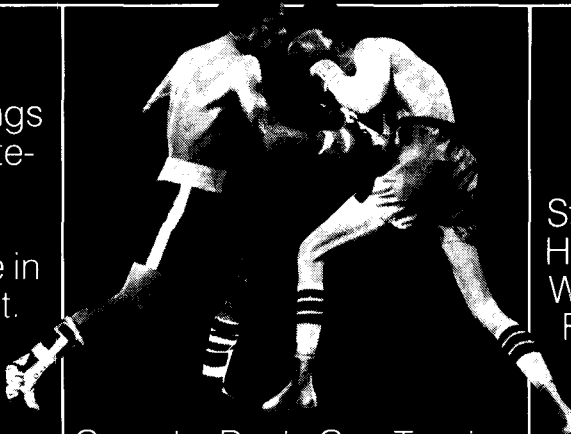
—Nancy Caldwell Sorel

SPORTS FROM ALL AROUND THE WORLD. ALL AROUND THE CLOCK.

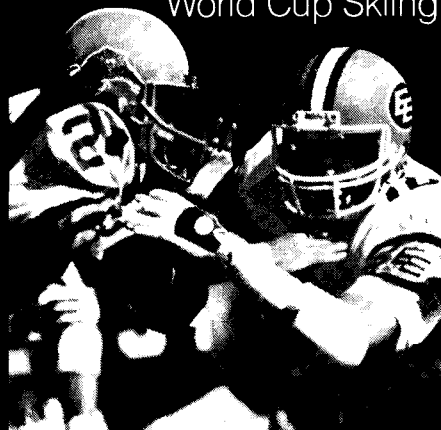


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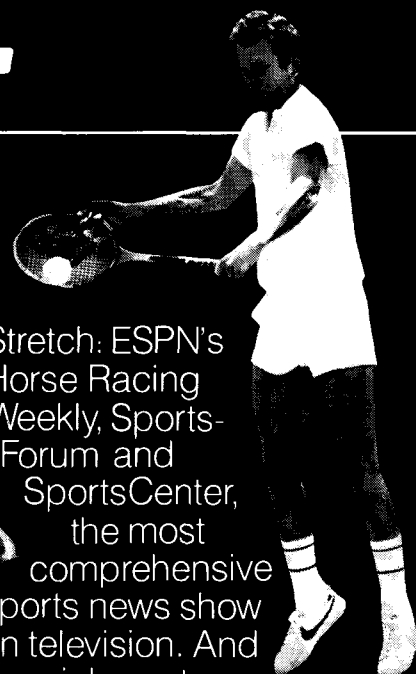


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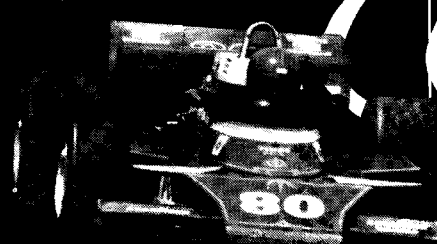


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FASHION

THE TRUTH IN FICTION

BY HOLLY BRUBACH

A LOT OF PEOPLE today have a hard time understanding how a woman with more important things to think about could be interested in fashion. And, ironically, many fashion designers feel the same way. Giorgio Armani, for one, was quoted recently in *The New York Times* as saying that "for many of us, fashion has become useless and gratuitous." This is in itself a very fashionable position.

People who think that fashion should be done away with altogether may want to think again after seeing the exhibition of designs by Yves Saint Laurent, from his debut, in 1958 (when, as a twenty-one-year-old apprentice, he assumed the leadership of the house of Dior after Christian Dior's death), to his collection for this past fall and winter, on view through September 2 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York. The decision to accord such a large show to a single designer—and to one who is still alive—is unprecedented in the Met's history; the other costume exhibitions, one a year for the past twelve years, have encompassed whole eras.

Obviously, Saint Laurent is a more commercial topic for an exhibition than the eighteenth century. Fashion magazines and Fifth Avenue department stores promoted this show in their pages and their windows. Every now and then, as I meandered through the rooms, I forgot myself and wondered if they had that dress in my size. There is something disorienting about standing in a museum that houses Greek sculptures, paintings by Rembrandt, and the Temple of Dendur and looking at a suit from last year's collection. If this were nothing more than a famous designer's hit parade, the Met's motives for celebrating Saint Laurent might be called into question. But the show is more than that: in presenting these clothes, it presents the most intelligent argument being made for fashion today.

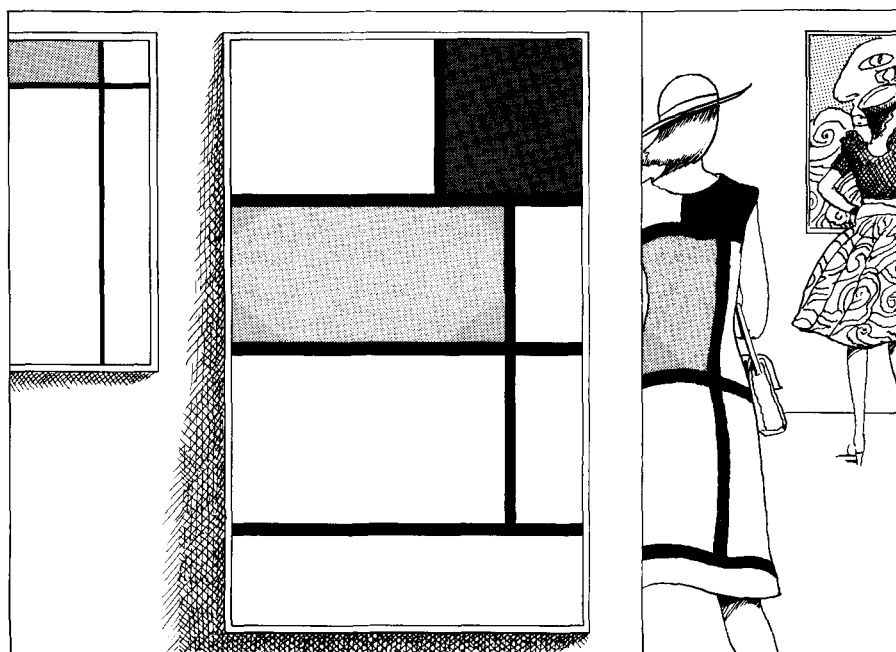
The designs of Saint Laurent consist-

tently inspire the use of the word "classic," which for the past ten years or so has been the highest distinction in fashion. But his classics are a far cry from the style we call classic—a narrow, stiff-backed, noncommittal style that boasts of expensive breeding and divulges nothing too personal. Classic clothes have an air of superiority about them, partly because they're the clothes most commonly worn by rich people and partly because they profess an immunity to the whims and longings that come over the rest of us. It's as if the world were a giant emporium, with a little balcony where the sensible few in their classic clothes sit and watch the fashion-conscious masses in their platform shoes and shoulder pads come and go beneath them.

Like true aristocrats, Saint Laurent's classics don't insist on standing apart. In a photograph by Duane Michals, published in 1976 in *Vogue*, three women wearing evening gowns from Saint Laurent's "Russian" collection walk away from the camera in a field bordered by a lane. The mist, the women's glances back over their shoulders, the gentle surge of the full taffeta skirts—the terms of this picture are poetic, like the clothes.

That collection was Saint Laurent's meditation on czarist Russia, and in 1976 a lot of women recognized in this photograph an image of the way they wanted to look; its exotic nostalgia was in the air. For any woman who bought into that image by buying from that collection, those clothes serve as a reminder of the mood she was in at the time. Saint Laurent enthusiastically captures the moment and perpetuates it, in fashionable clothes that seem plausible years later.

To be exact, Saint Laurent's designs are not in the classic style but in the classical tradition. He consolidates the past, paying his respects to other designers in his own collections, reviving their reputations. Saint Laurent has done for Chanel and Schiaparelli what Stravinsky did for Pergolesi and Tchaikovsky. He raids art galleries and museums for material and designs clothes that look as if they have walked out of paintings—satin harlequin suits, like those worn by Picasso's *saltimbanques*, or the "Matisse dress," a deep-blue taffeta gown with a white organdy ruffle. Further afield, Saint Laurent does a collection in the style of a favorite painter—Mondrian mini-dresses, with panels of primary colors framed in black on a white background. Alongside these tributes to painters are fan letters to movie stars—clothes that recall Joan Crawford, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, and Audrey Hepburn, and give off a big-screen kind of glamour. His heroines, among them, the Duchesse de Guermantes, Anna Karenina, and la Traviata, find their way into his collections.



Holly Brubach is a staff writer for The Atlantic.

Saint Laurent has drawn on national costumes the way George Balanchine drew on national dances, borrowing the soutache braid from a cossack's coat or the ribbon bow at the knee from a bull-fighter's knickers, as Balanchine borrowed a Hungarian gypsy's arm positions or a Scottish sword dancer's precision footwork. His "African" beaded mini-dresses are no more African than Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* is Japanese, though Saint Laurent must know enough to have made them look authentic if he wanted to (he was born and raised in Algeria); these are caricatures.

With little concern for their origins, Saint Laurent appropriates ideas in the public domain and refines them, until each becomes a more sophisticated, more carefully considered version of itself. He brings his eye and his intelligence to bear on a style and restates its appeal in his own concise terms. His renditions of old standards like the trench coat and the double-breasted blazer are definitive—the best of their kind, once and for all.

Saint Laurent is not an inventor—not like Paul Poiret, for example, who came up with clothes no one had ever seen before. He is primarily a pasticheur. Which is not to say that he isn't original—he makes something new out of what already exists. From military uniforms, national costumes, the fashions of the past, he pieces together the style of our time.

IT'S IN LOOKING at Saint Laurent's most sumptuous evening gowns that the full force of his talent hits you. There are two wedding gowns, astonishingly original essays in a form that seems as if it should have been exhausted long ago: one, "Shakespearean," in red and gold brocade and damask; the other, a patchwork of white ottoman and satin that makes for a syncopated play of light on the surface. This dress is of the caliber of a gown by Charles Worth, the couturier who ruled Paris fashion for the latter half of the nineteenth century. But on first glance at a dress by Worth, you get no more than the gist of it; it's only after you inspect it closely that you can truly appreciate it. With Saint Laurent, you can take in the whole dress right off—his stroke is that bold.

There is about many of Saint Laurent's designs an almost graphic simplicity: it's the line you look at first. Like Charles James, another master of line and shape, Saint Laurent prefers to work in solid color. Even when the surface is

complicated, as it is on his red silk faille Picasso dress, appliquéd with swirls of bright-colored satin on the skirt, the shape of the dress asserts itself—a long fitted bodice to the hip that seems to explode into a knee-length skirt, full and stiff enough to stand out wide. The deep U neckline and the elbow-length sleeves are banded in black, as if the dress had been first drawn in ink and then colored in. Saint Laurent loves edging. He uses it along the lapel of a jacket, or along the flap of an asymmetrical wrap skirt, as a band of contrasting color that makes the shape more clearly defined.

Saint Laurent's clothes compel our interest beyond that first impression, because the color combinations are so often amazing, the cut so expert. In a grouping of six evening gowns from the Russian collection, all of them breathtaking, there is one that stands out from the rest: it has a black velvet bodice, a seafoam-green satin skirt with a claret velvet band at the hem, orange satin sleeves, and a fuchsia satin sash. These are colors we've never seen together before, and their dissonance is intriguing.

Saint Laurent cuts clothes in such a way that they call attention to a woman's body; these are not the sort of clothes a woman can hide out in. But neither are they tight or skimpy. Saint Laurent makes you see how seductive a lot of fabric can be, by somehow indicating the scale of the body underneath—even the most voluminous dresses are cinched at the waist, or cut higher in front to reveal a slim ankle. The "bubble" dress, which balloons out over the waist and hips, is reined in to a narrow hem at the knees. When Saint Laurent does men's wear for women, there is nothing androgynous about it. His variations on the tuxedo, for instance—dresses, skirts, and pants in black wool gabardine, with a black satin stripe down the side—are provocative because at the same time that they call to mind a man's black-tie uniform they call attention to a woman's body.

"Sexy" is too simplistic a word to describe these clothes, though Saint Laurent at his worst overemphasizes a woman's shape, and then his clothes look tarty. When he's at his best, their sex appeal is part of something larger—a sense of pride, even of power. His clothes also convey intelligence, dignity, integrity, arrogance, sophistication, and a respect for order. The dread and hopelessness that pervade so many of the recent clothes by Japanese designers, notably Rei Kawakubo, are nowhere to be found

in Saint Laurent's collections. Japanese fashion in its more extreme forms prefigures a world that no one is looking forward to. The woman who wears Comme des Garçons (Kawakubo's label) is well off but not proud of it, unwilling to dress herself up so that other people have something pleasing to look at, and overburdened by the news she reads every day in the paper.

The woman who wears clothes by Saint Laurent, on the other hand, is rich and successful, judging from the day suits. She runs her own business and manages an active but convivial life. She subscribes to the opera, goes to dinner parties, and travels widely. Judging from the evening gowns, she is hopelessly romantic. Judging from the satin evening jacket embroidered with a quotation from Cocteau, she is eager to advertise her intellect. (Judging from the African dresses, especially the one with menacing cones protruding at the breasts, she is desperate for attention.)

The philosophy implicit in these clothes is that fashion now is a highly sophisticated grown-ups' game of dress-up, that the range of roles available to any one person is extensive, that we make up who we are as we go along. There is nothing dishonest in this, though it's sometimes more convenient to think that we're the products of our upbringing. Cary Grant, the Duchess of Windsor, Boy George—these are all people who imagined identities for themselves and then became those identities in all sincerity. "She's a phony," remarks one of Holly Golightly's friends in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, "but she's a real phony."

Over the course of the past twenty-five years, Saint Laurent has provided the women who wear his clothes with a vast repertory. By putting on whichever of these images she chooses, a woman lets the world in on her fantasy life, which looks to be adventurous and colorful. In telling us who the woman wearing them would like to be, these clothes reveal more about who she really is than clothes that stick to the facts ever could. It is this, I suspect, that fashion's detractors object to in Saint Laurent's clothes—this business of playing fast and loose with a woman's identity. But for his customers it's a relief and a means of seeing that their personalities don't become circumscribed. This extravagance—which is more psychological than material—is what fashion today amounts to, and the scenery of our everyday lives would be less spectacular without it. □

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COMPUTERS

PERSONAL PREFERENCES

BY JAMES FALLOWS

THE FRONTIER DAYS are ending in the personal-computer business, which is arguably a good thing. It is easier to select a machine for general business purposes now that the IBM Personal Computer has become the industry standard. There's less danger that a newly purchased computer will be orphaned by the software industry now that two or three "disk operating systems" are widely accepted. (An operating system is a set of fundamental instructions that allows a computer to use programs. Four years ago, there were a dozen of them. Now, with a smaller variety of operating systems, most new computer programs can be made to run on most machines.) Computer equipment is much cheaper than it was only three years ago. Then you might have had to pay \$4,000 to \$6,000 for a full business setup, including a computer and a printer. Now you can find systems for half that much, and some home computers, suitable for games and other casual uses, are available for less than \$500.

Do these developments, amply chronicled not just in computer magazines but also in the general press, mean that everyone should go out and buy a computer? No. As the industry evolves, it becomes more and more obvious that personal computers make sense for certain people performing certain tasks and are expensive superfluities for nearly everyone else. It would be stretching things to say that computers are merely the white-collar world's equivalents of drill presses or machine tools—that is, purely functional implements. To many people they offer an element of fun. To many others they bode terror: people may be physically more frightened of a whirring metal lathe than of any computer, but they rarely worry that their failure to possess lathes and to become "lathe-literate" will be a handicap to them.

My purpose here is to suggest several ways of making choices about computers. I will be talking about machines in the personal-computer category, which cost \$1,500 and up and can handle the best-established programs for word pro-

cessing, financial calculations, and other business functions. This excludes home computers, such as the Commodore VIC 20 and 64, Atari's 600XL and 800XL, the now-discontinued Texas Instruments 99/4A, and Coleco's new Adam system. These are much less costly, and for some purposes, such as educational programs, they are ideal. But they have various limitations, usually the quality of their video displays or the storage capacity of their disk drives, that make them less at-



tractive for heavy-duty word-processing or business use. For most people, one of the more expensive machines constitutes a major purchase. Your answers to the questions that follow may help you determine whether such a purchase makes sense, and if so, how to begin sorting among the many choices available.

How would you use a computer?

Surely the worst reason for buying a computer is to cope with the fear that many TV commercials try to evoke: if you don't buy one, your kids will flunk out of college and fail in life. This is the old encyclopedia salesman's line, no less

disreputable for being tricked out in a high-tech disguise. Fifteen years from now, some sociologist is sure to demonstrate a correlation between parents who bought computers and children who are admitted to medical school. But it will be a statistical artifact: these families will be the same affluent ones whose children would have become doctors and lawyers anyway.

Except, perhaps, to those who hope to make their living in the computer business—a sizable class, but not the entire population, despite appearances to the contrary—childhood exposure to the workings of computers should be no more essential than childhood classes in repairing cars. Yes, computers may someday be as ubiquitous as cars; yes, it is convenient to know how to deal with them. But the level of knowledge necessary for dealing with computers is going down; the routine use of automated teller machines is an example. As computers grow more sophisticated, they become ever easier to use—as automobiles did, when they moved out of the hand-cranked era.

Computers can help children drill in reading and math and foreign languages. For some students, a computer seems to be the device that creates a spark of interest in academics. Programming languages designed especially for children, like Logo, may steer some students toward adult interests or careers in electronics—as ham radios did a generation ago. Very young children may find written composition more satisfying if the results appear neatly and semi-magically on a computer screen, rather than as scrawled and scratched-out letters. On the whole, it's probably good for children to have put their hands on a computer. But it is not a matter of life and death.

Among adults, there are several categories of people for whom computers make obvious sense. One is writers, by which I mean those people who commit a lot of words to paper in a typical week or month. They include students, researchers, letter writers, secretaries, journalists, novelists, lawyers, and the few business executives who have resisted the idea that placing one's fingers on a keyboard is a mark of secretarial caste. Anyone who must produce form letters, whether for political campaigns or for sales drives, should have a computer. As several millennia of literature attest, no one needs a computer in order to write. But most people find computers much more convenient than typewriters, espe-

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Week of Feb. 28, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Mar. 7, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Mar. 14, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Mar. 21, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Mar. 28, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Apr. 4, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Apr. 11, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Apr. 18, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Apr. 25, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of May 2, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of May 9, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of May 16, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of May 23, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of May 30, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Jun. 6, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Jun. 13, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Jun. 20, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Jun. 27, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
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Week of Jul. 11, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
Week of Jul. 18, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
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Week of Nov. 21, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
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Week of Dec. 26, 1983.	Lotus 1-2-3. #1.
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cially if their work requires frequent revision and retyping. I've yet to hear of a writer who used a computer and then willingly switched back to a typewriter or a quill pen.

Another category is accountants, which includes the managers of small businesses and any others responsible for keeping track of inventories, figures, and accounts. Here the advantages of computers are obvious. For some kinds of household finance, especially keeping income-tax records, computers can also be very useful.

From the industry's point of view, the most important category of users is the MBAs of the world, who want to convert numerical information into bar graphs or pie charts and then insert the results into memos or reports. Indeed, the Harvard Business School, *fons et origo* of MBAs, has announced that its first-year students will be required to buy their own portable IBM PCs. "Integrated" programs, which allow business managers to move data quickly from master accounts to reports and charts, have been the stars of the software industry. One in particular, called Lotus 1-2-3, has been a runaway sales success.

The features you will be looking for in a computer will depend on which of these categories you fall into. (If you're in none of them, you should think of a computer as a luxury purchase, like a video recorder, and judge it according to how much pleasure it seems likely to give you.)

People who will primarily be writing should care quite a bit about how words look on the video display. Computers with screens that are larger than normal, such as the TeleVideo 803, or that offer very sharp resolution, such as the Texas Instruments Professional Computer, the HP 150 from Hewlett-Packard, and the Victor 9000, may be appealing. The feel and convenience of the keyboard are also important. These are subjective judgments, but some form of palm rest and numerous "function keys" are advantageous. There is a difference between "click" and "non-click" keyboards; the click version, notably that of the IBM Personal Computer, requires a much stiffer push in order for keystrokes to register. Finally, writers should pay attention to the storage capacity of the computer's disk drives. It becomes much more convenient to write, and to use

good word-processing programs, when the computer has two disk drives and each of them can hold more than 200 kilobytes of information, known as 200K. Drives that hold 300K or 400K are even better.

Single-drive computers often can't run the best word-processing programs, and they are maddeningly inconvenient when you want to make backup copies of your disks. Writers need pay almost no attention to how much random-access memory—the storage capacity inside the computer itself, known as RAM—a computer has or whether it uses an "8-bit" or a "16-bit" microprocessing chip. The bottom-of-the-line personal computer is an 8-bit machine with 64K of RAM. For writing, that is all you need.

For accounting and financial uses, however, the niceties of screen appearance and keyboard feel are less important, and having a 16-bit system with lots of RAM matters more. Nearly all the MBA-style integrated systems are designed exclusively for 16-bit chips. In this market, it often makes sense to choose the software first and then shop around to see which computer will do the best job for the least cost of running Lotus 1-2-3 or Context MBA or some other program. The idea of comparison shopping brings us to our next question.

Whose money are you spending?

In the capital of Ghana, meals in hotels can cost more than they would in New York City, but on the street, Ghanaians buy their supplies of cassava for a few pesewas a day. This is what economists call a "dual economy," which also characterizes the personal-computer business today. The great dividing line in the personal-computer market is between people who are charging their purchases to their companies and those who are spending their own money.

The initial rise of the IBM Personal Computer was due to purchasers who were spending the company's money, not their own. There is really nothing wrong with the IBM PC, but it can cost \$1,000 to \$2,000 more than machines with comparable features from other manufacturers. To choose IBM is to commit the sin of "paying for the name." But if you are spending someone else's money, why not go with IBM? It is an impeccably safe decision; in making it, you avoid all risks that the manufacturer will fold or that someone will accuse you of having made an irresponsible choice. It is also a sensible decision for those who

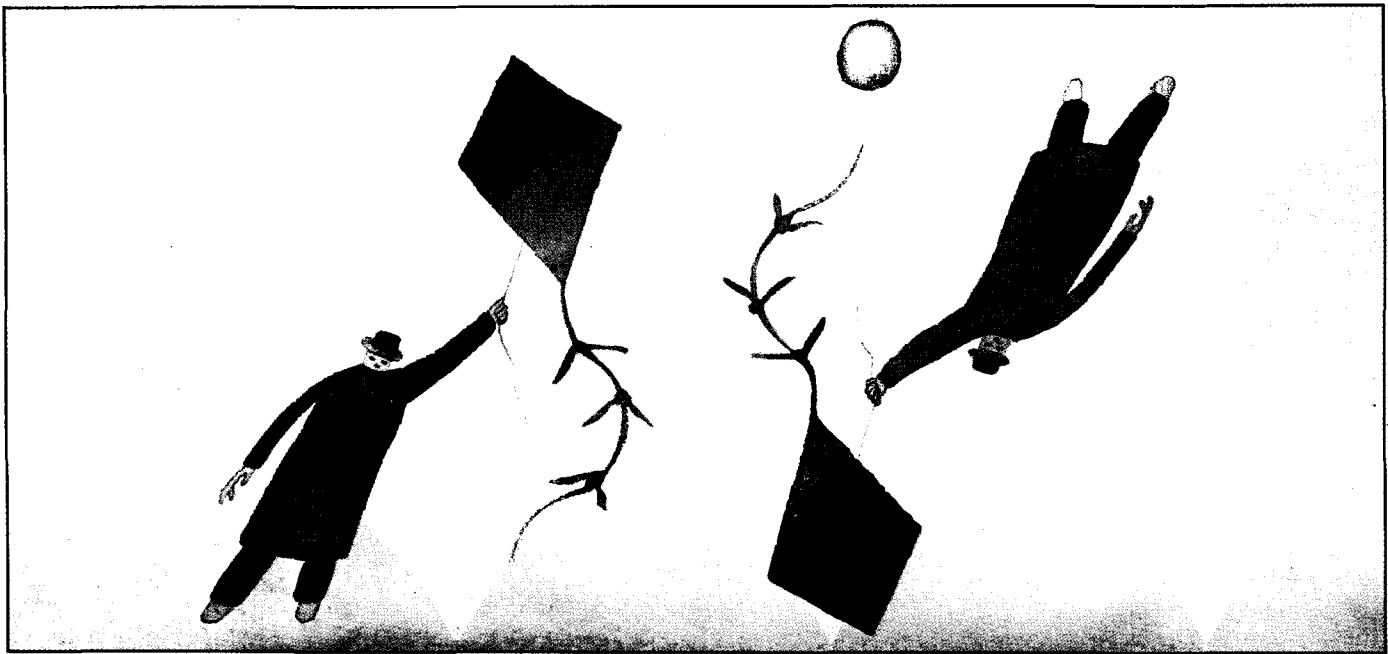
live far from a big city and want to be sure of reliable service and supplies.

By contrast, a computer company known as Kaypro owes its existence to people who are spending their own money. The Kaypro was the second prominent entry, after the ill-starred Osborne 1, into the market for low-priced portable computers. Osborne was slow coming out with an improved version of its original computer, and the company went down in the first well-publicized Silicon Valley crash. Kaypro, which has kept offering better models and lower prices, has been a spectacular success. It rose from zero sales of personal computers in 1981 to fourth place in the industry now. It is outsold only by the big boys: IBM, Apple, and Radio Shack.

To an expense-account purchaser, a Kaypro may seem risky and somewhat unglamorous, but to someone paying out of his own pocket, it looks like a wonderful deal. The truly distinctive feature of the Kaypro, like that of the Osborne, is not its portability (each is roughly the size and weight of a sewing machine) but its price. For a price initially set at \$1,795 and soon lowered to \$1,595, it offered a perfectly serviceable 8-bit computer plus a collection of software that itself listed for more than \$1,200. Kaypro now offers a package including a computer and programs for less than the list price of the programs alone. You could get along for years with nothing but the initial software. It includes programs for word processing (both WordStar and Perfect Writer, plus an excellent spelling checker called The Word Plus), for filing information, and for developing "spreadsheets," which can be used for almost any mathematical or accounting purposes.

So, if you are spending someone else's money, you may feel drawn to the dominant IBM PC. You'll probably also want to spend time in some of the nationwide computer-store chains, which usually sell both hardware and software at full list price. If you're paying your own way, you might look instead for smaller dealers who are ready to haggle, and concentrate on the Kaypro or another established bargain such as the Morrow Micro Decision or TeleVideo's model 803. Mail-order houses offer big discounts on computers, but they provide none of the hand-holding and troubleshooting that most new owners need in the first week or two after the sale. You might also consider new low-cost computers being offered by Intertec and Cromemco, or the

James Fallows is the Washington editor of The Atlantic.



ELECTRICITY FROM THE ATOM

Are we moving in the right direction?

The value of nuclear power is being questioned these days mainly because of serious financial problems with some plants under construction. What's often overlooked is that with 80 plants operating in the U.S., and over 200 more throughout the world, nuclear-generated electricity is already being used extensively, safely, and economically.

High interest rates and inflation, plus a massive updating of safety regulations, plus construction slowdowns, have made many of the nuclear plants now under construction much more expensive than they were when originally planned.

Yet these plants will still be needed, because demand for electricity is growing.

A growing economy needs more electricity

Industry is shifting to manufacturing processes that use electricity for better energy efficiency. Electronic technology is improving productivity. Our heating and cooling needs in offices, factories, malls, and homes continue to boost electrical demand.

The question raised in the past few months boils down to this: Can nuclear power plants, fueled by

uranium, produce reasonably priced electricity?

Uranium saves money and fuel

The average cost of electricity from the 80 U.S. nuclear plants now operating is less than half the cost of oil-generated electricity. And in many parts of the country, it's roughly the same as or somewhat less than electricity from coal.

Most of the nuclear plants now operating were built before the years of double-digit inflation and persistently high interest rates—huge fac-

tors in the higher cost of the plants now approaching completion. Even so, over their 30- to 40-year lifetimes, these new plants can provide economic benefits because of the lower cost of uranium fuel.

Renewing the nuclear promise

Utilities have learned to be more realistic about what it takes to construct and run a nuclear plant. They have been beefing up their nuclear engineering staffs and strengthening their operator training programs.

At the same time, the Federal government is moving to reform the nuclear regulation process, which causes needless delays and often adds hundreds of millions of dollars in excessive construction and operating costs.

But these steps alone are not enough. The full potential of nuclear power will be achieved only with a full public understanding of its benefits. Then, the development of America's nuclear-electric energy will continue to move in the right direction.

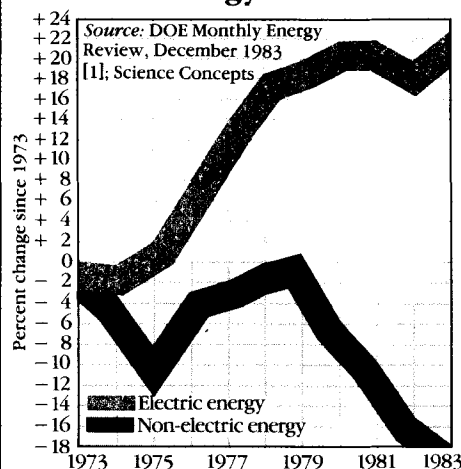
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Electric vs. non-electric energy use



While the use of non-electric energy has declined, U.S. consumption of electric energy has increased by over 25% since the Arab oil embargo.

venerable Apple IIe, which has long been overpriced but is finally being discounted. (Warning: the Apple's keyboard and screen make it a far-from-ideal system for writers.) Or you might inspect some of the numerous "IBM compatibles," such as those mentioned in the next section.

How many bits do you need, and do you want compatibility?

The technical difference between 8- and 16-bit computers has to do with the microprocessing chips that control the computer's logic. Some handle instructions or information in units of 8 "bits," others in units of 16. A bit is a 0-or-1 unit of machine code; it takes a grouping of 8 bits, known as a byte, to represent one character from the alphabet.

A 16-bit chip has two advantages. Most varieties work faster than 8-bit chips, which can be important for large mathematical operations—but not for word processing, which requires surprisingly little computational power. Also, they can "address" a much larger amount of active computer memory, which means that they can manipulate more data at one time. Typically, a 16-bit computer will contain between two and sixteen times as much memory as an 8-bit machine. This, in turn, makes possible the integrated programs like 1-2-3, which allow you to flash instantly from graphics to word processing and then go on to financial calculations.

The 16-bit chip has acquired a wave-of-the-future aura, largely because IBM selected the Intel 8088, a 16-bit chip, for its Personal Computer. There are so many 8-bit programs and computers on the market that no one need fear the extinction of the breed, but if you are worried about not being able to use all future business-management programs, you can eliminate even the hint of fear by concentrating on 16-bit computers, or by choosing one of the several machines that contain both 8- and 16-bit chips and can run either kind of software. These include the Z 110, made by Zenith, the Fujitsu Micro 16s, the Digital Rainbow 100, and an adapted version of the Victor 9000.

THE SAFEST COURSE of all, naturally, is to stick with the IBM PC or one of its many "compatible" clones. "PC compatibility" is an elusive concept. Some manufacturers mean by it only that their computers use the same microprocessing chip that the IBM does; others, that their

computers will run programs written for the operating system known as MS-DOS, which IBM has made the standard for 16-bit systems. No competitive machine is identical to the PC, since IBM kept a small part of the computer's internal architecture a proprietary secret; this means that some proportion of the programs written for the IBM PC will not run properly on the clones. The best test of compatibility is to ask a dealer to insert into the non-IBM machines that you are considering IBM versions of the programs you want to run. The most demanding tests of compatibility are said to be 1-2-3 and a game called Flight Simulator.

There are distinct advantages to buying a compatible machine. Because the PC has become so popular, the industry is glutted with suppliers who make attachments and improvements for compatibles, usually at a lower price than for comparable equipment for other computers. When new programs come onto the market, they are released first, and sometimes only, in an IBM format. By choosing IBM or a clone, then, you can keep your options open.

Unfortunately, PC compatibility has become so oppressive a force that other manufacturers are degrading their products in order to make them resemble the PC. One of the mysteries of the computer culture is why IBM, inventor of the marvelous Selectric keyboard, equipped the PC with an aberrant keyboard that has the Shift and Return keys in surprising locations. Companies with distinguished keyboards—TeleVideo, for example—are now altering them so that their keyboards will be more like IBM's. The Victor 9000 contains a unique disk-drive mechanism that enables it to store 1,200K of data on each disk, about four times as much as the PC can store. Soon Victor Technologies, whose computer is the best-selling 16-bit system in Europe but which has been driven to Chapter 11 proceedings in the United States by its machine's lack of PC compatibility, will offer an attachment that will make the machine compatible, but at the cost of drastically reducing the storage capacity.

If you want to take advantage of compatibility, you should compare the PC, dollar for dollar and feature for feature, with other 16-bit models. At the moment, the best-known compatible is the Compaq, a bulky "portable" model, which is more completely compatible but also more expensive than most of the

other IBM substitutes. A model with a monitor, two disk drives, and 128K of memory costs \$2,995. (Unless stated otherwise, the prices that follow are for models similarly equipped. An IBM PC thus outfitted costs \$3,658.) IBM has announced a "portable" of its own, but if there is any sanity in the marketplace, this thirty-pound behemoth should not eliminate demand for the Compaq.

Other compatibles include the Chameleon, from Seequa Computers, a smaller and less expensive portable (starting at \$1,995 with some software); Radio Shack's Model 2000, which uses a faster, improved version of the 16-bit chip and coyly calls itself "MS-DOS compatible," rather than referring to the hated IBM (\$2,999); the family of portable and desk-model machines from Eagle Computers (\$3,295/\$3,419) or Columbia Data Products (\$2,995/\$3,620), which are very compatible and, in the case of Columbia, come with free software; the Hyperion, a trim portable with a high-resolution amber screen (\$3,690 with 256K of RAM); Texas Instruments' Professional Computer, which offers better graphics than the IBM (\$2,970); the Sanyo MBC 555, one of the least expensive compatibles, which includes a Kaypro-like package of free software (\$1,595); the Visual Commuter (\$2,885); and the Corona (\$2,995). Others are coming onto the market day by day.

Many manufacturers, including IBM, offer a model equipped with a mechanism known as a hard-disk, or Winchester, drive, which stores about twenty-five times as much information as a floppy disk and speeds the operation of many programs, for \$1,000 to \$1,500 more than the price of the standard model. Hard disks are useful for large accounting projects and are luxuries for writers. It is cheaper to buy a built-in hard-disk drive at the beginning than to add one on later.

Also, Digital's Rainbow is a solid though costly 8- and 16-bit machine (\$3,795). Its only drawback is a kind of anti-ergonomic design, which leaves the screen sitting so low on the table that you must hunch over to see it. The Kaypro has a similar disability, unless you use several thick books to prop it up. The HP 150 from Hewlett-Packard is an attractive, well-equipped, fast-working 16-bit machine that comes with a bizarre extra known as a "touch screen." To indicate your choices, you can use the keyboard—or touch certain parts of the screen. The screen itself is not sensitive,

but your finger breaks a grid of light beams that shine across the screen from the edges (\$3,995 with 256K of memory).

YOU MAY ALSO elect to ignore the quandary of IBM versus compatibles versus 8-bits altogether and take a different path. Epson offers one alternative with its QX-10 computer, which comes with a unique and completely noncompatible set of software. Epson has advertised this machine as being revolutionarily simple to use, and, indeed, its keyboard has buttons labeled "Print" and "Retrieve" and "Draw" in place of cryptically identified function keys. It strikes me as easy to learn but cumbersome to use, since the same elaborate programming that makes it "user friendly" renders its functions slower than other machines'.

Another option is to look for true portability, which is offered by several lap-size eight-by-twelve-inch computers with full-sized keyboards. The two leaders are Radio Shack's Model 100 and NEC's PC-8201. Both offer similar features at roughly similar prices. NEC prices start at \$799 for the basic model, with 16K of memory. The Radio Shack model with the same amount of memory costs \$919.

A more dramatic alternative is now offered by Apple with its new Macintosh computer (\$2,495 with one disk drive, \$495 more for a second drive), unveiled early this year. Simply as a business story, the Macintosh is irresistible, especially when contrasted with IBM's new home/personal computer, the PCjr, which was introduced nearly simultaneously. The PCjr is a low-cost model designed primarily to pose no marketplace threat to the PC. The keys on its keyboard look like Chiclets, and repel any serious attempts to type on them. The PCjr is clearly the product of marketing men, rather than of people who are excited about computers, and so far it has met a deservedly lukewarm reception.

Plenty of marketing is going into the Macintosh, too, but Apple is betting the company's future on a leap in technology. The technology is not entirely new, since it was incorporated a year ago in Apple's overpriced (\$9,995) Lisa computer and before that in the Xerox Star system. But it will strike anyone who sees it for the first time—including the thousands of college students whose institutions have already contracted for mass purchases of the Macintosh—as amazingly new and promising.

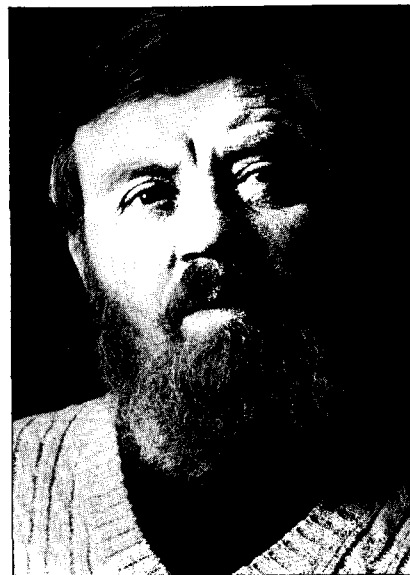
Like the Lisa, the Macintosh is based on the Motorola MC 68000, a chip that most of the industry regards as 16-bit but that Apple is promoting as 32-bit. The chip permits both machines to perform splashier tricks with graphics than almost any other computers can. The most obvious difference between them is that Lisa can juggle several projects at once—a memo might be displayed on one part of the screen and a graph-in-progress on another—while the Macintosh takes them one at a time. I will not attempt to describe how the Macintosh and the Lisa operate and will instead propose that if you are thinking about buying a computer, you spend two hours sitting through a demonstration of the Macintosh or the new, less-expensive line of Lisas (less than \$4,000 with one disk drive, less than \$5,500 with a built-in hard disk).

The Macintosh-Lisa approach relies heavily on a "mouse," a mechanical device about the size of a cigarette box that moves the cursor to different parts of the screen when you move the mouse to different parts of your desk. It is meant to be quicker and to feel more natural than pushing the up-arrow or the right-arrow button on a keyboard. The mouse is marvelous for graphics, but I find it annoyingly clumsy for writing. Perhaps the Macintosh's most serious limitation for writers is that, at least in its introductory version, it cannot be used with a letter-quality printer. Moreover, the word-processing programs initially available on the Macintosh are rudimentary, so writers will want to think hard before letting their initial infatuation sweep them away.

It is impossible to tell whether the Macintosh will make Apple a robust, long-term competitor of IBM. Apple's products, like IBM's, have never been underpriced, and the industry grapevine has carried warnings that Apple may have fatally limited the Macintosh's appeal by pricing it about \$500 too high. Still, I hope that Apple wins the gamble that the Macintosh represents, because everyone in the business, including IBM, will be better off if IBM must cope with a worthy rival. Standardization has made the computer market a less threatening place for most purchasers, but too much stability can erode the very qualities that made the personal-computer industry such a boon to America in the first place. If the PCjr and the Macintosh represent the different paths toward the future that the industry might take, I know which choice I'm rooting for. □

May report on

ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS BOOKS



Though they resemble one another, this man is *not* the character named Tyler from the hit movie *Never Cry Wolf*. No, this is **Farley Mowat** himself, the author who wrote the book from which Carroll Ballard made his magnificent film.

Never Cry Wolf was originally published in the United States in 1963 by the Atlantic Monthly Press and has gone through many editions since then. It is a comic, mystical, indignant story based on Farley Mowat's own observations, in 1947, of the relations between white man, Eskimo, wolf, and caribou in the Canadian barren lands. **Never Cry Wolf** has been celebrated around the world and translated into at least fifteen languages.

If you, like millions of other Americans, were astounded by the beauty and the deep feeling of Carroll Ballard's movie, now is the time for you to read Farley Mowat's classic book and be truly amazed.

NEVER CRY WOLF
by Farley Mowat

\$12.95 at your bookstore

LITTLE, BROWN

Also available from The Atlantic Bookstore, page 123

MUSIC

THE GROOVES OF MOTOWN

BY STEPHEN HOLDEN

THE MUSIC by which a generation remembers its past tends to be its romantic dance music. Glenn Miller's "Moonlight Serenade," the Five Satins' "In the Still of the Night," the Supremes' "Stop! In the Name of Love," and the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" are signature hits of particular moments in cultural history. In the movie *The Big Chill*, the song that whisks a bunch of ex-counterculturalists along the road to a reunion at the funeral of a friend isn't sung by the Beatles, Bob Dylan, or the Rolling Stones but by Marvin Gaye: "I Heard It Through the Grapevine."

Nostalgia, though, is only a small part of the overwhelming impact that Motown continues to have on pop. The triumvirate of stars who dominate American pop music today—Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, and Lionel Richie—came to prominence at Motown, and Motown's original sounds keep being recycled by white singers and producers. New Wave rock groups like the B-52s and X have built their most exhilarating anthems on dance beats that Motown originated. Many artists in the so-called Second British Invasion have modeled their musical postures on sixties Motown hits: Culture Club's Boy George recalls Smokey Robinson's rhapsodic sob, ABC's Martin Fry parodies the Four Tops, and dance bands like Soft Cell electronically synthesize Motown rhythms. In America, the "blue-eyed soul" duo Daryl Hall and John Oates stitch time-honored Motown motifs into high-tech rock arrangements with a scientific precision; for instance, the bass intro of their recent number-one hit, "Maneater," is an exact reprise of the snappy regimental bass line that opens the Supremes' 1966 hit "You Can't Hurry Love."

Motown has come to be synonymous with the broad, generic style we call pop-soul. Ray Charles's versions of country standards may have been the first hits to invigorate white pop with full-out gospel

crying, but rhythmically Charles's records were grounded more in fifties big-band jazz than in the rock-and-roll that inspired Motown. It remained for Motown to fuse raw southern soul, gospel, and urban street-corner harmony with a streamlined rock-and-roll rhythm indebted to California surf music as well as to Phil Spector and New York writer-producer teams of the early sixties. Berry Gordy, Jr., the founder of Motown, liked to call this product The Sound of Young America, for it was designed to appeal to whites as much as to blacks. Gordy's ideal, caricatured in the Broadway musical *Dreamgirls*, was a simple but urbane, black-oriented, all-American pop style—Rodgers and Hammerstein with a beat.

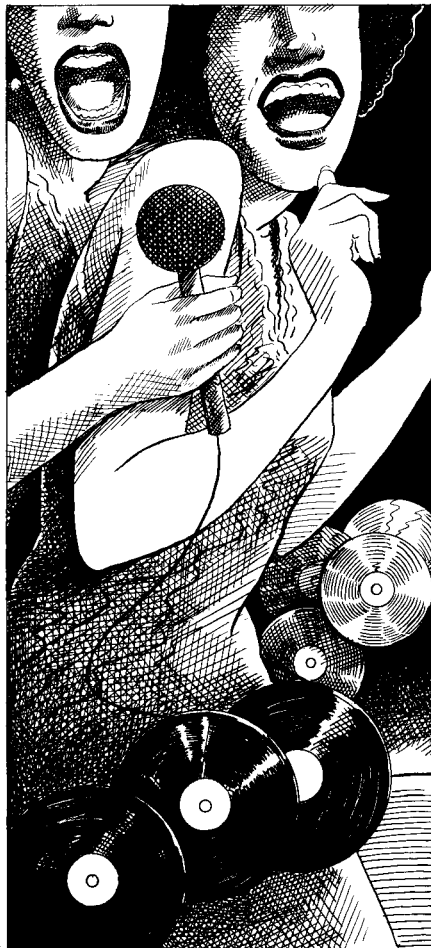
By the mid-sixties, Gordy had gathered in his company's Detroit headquar-

ters—a two-story frame house with a sign outside that read "Hitsville U.S.A."—a music assembly line run like an old-time Hollywood movie studio. Besides its stars, who received charm-school grooming, the Motown stable included resident songwriter-producers and a salaried house band that was probably the finest studio band of the sixties. Under Gordy's paternalistic rule, his extended "family" invented the basic recipes of pop-soul, breaking down what had been called rhythm-and-blues into the dance beats that we call grooves.

The most important of the label's influential songwriting-producing teams was Brian Holland, his brother Eddie, and Lamont Dozier, who together created the music for the Supremes and the Four Tops as well as hits for the Temptations and Marvin Gaye. They took the jagged, aggressive four-beat of hard soul music and made it into an up-tempo dance style that had a smoother, more softly mechanized bump-and-grind momentum. The frills of soul and doowop—the sax breaks and the *baby, baby*s—were built into the structure of Motown songs, becoming melodic "hooks" cyclically strung through the arrangements. Holland-Dozier-Holland's Supremes records, in which Diana Ross's sly, tart voice insinuatingly trailed the backbeat, set down the most basic Motown grooves. In "Where Did Our Love Go?" the groove propelled a tune that compressed the staccato syncopation of street talk into a hypnotic chant ("Baby, baby, where did our love go?").

Smokey Robinson was almost as important as Holland-Dozier-Holland. A singer, songwriter, and producer who is still a vice-president at Motown, he elevated the semi-articulate burlblings of doowop to a rapturous, primitive folk poetry. In the Temptations' standard "My Girl" and in Smokey Robinson and the Miracles' "The Tracks of My Tears," the poetry was wedded to a strolling Latin rhythm. Robinson's imploring coo remains the vocal ideal of male soul falsetto, imitated by countless male balladeers but never matched.

Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong, the songwriter-producers who worked with the Temptations in the late sixties and early seventies, developed longer dance singles with socially relevant lyrics, bizarre sound effects, and fragmented orchestration. These psychedelic productions became prototypes for today's hard-edged "electronic boogie," which combines a defiant urban aggressiveness



Stephen Holden is a music critic for The New York Times.

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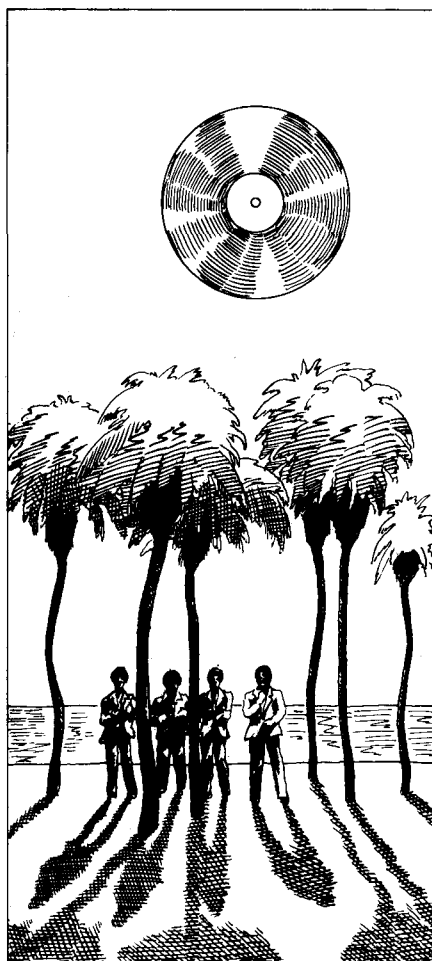
with a video-arcade ambience. Songs like "Papa Was a Rolling Stone" laid the groundwork for contemporary rap records, in which singers declaim partly improvised street poetry over a funk beat.

What Motown added up to was a new vision of love and life in pop music. If fifties rock-and-roll pioneers made the institutionalized bad grammar of the blues seem hip to white middle-class kids, Motown's repetitive *ain'ts* and *baby, babys* gave it a far broader respectability. Before rock, the most admired music had aspired to a certain level of articulate sophistication. Good songs were supposed to have a narrative stateliness and a harmonic and melodic complexity—attributes that had earned the best of Rodgers and Hart, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, and others the label "vernacular art songs." At the same time, black jazz and blues singers dreamed of getting "class" by recording standards with a studio orchestra.

The best three or four dozen Motown hits set out a new pop vocabulary that was just as compelling but not as artful. Romantic love was not about planning for the future but about living in the moment. Sex and romance became joined in an idea of life as a series of intense ups and downs. The language was filled with sexual metaphors ("Heat Wave") and ineffable sighs ("Ooo, Baby, Baby"). With their smoothly suggestive dance grooves, these songs became icons of a sexually revolutionized culture. And coming during the period of greatest expectations among blacks in America, they surged with a deep optimism.

THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM has it that Motown's influence declined after 1971, when the company moved to Los Angeles and two of its stars, Stevie Wonder and Marvin Gaye, negotiated contracts granting them artistic freedom. In a narrow sense, it *did* decline. The music was no longer built around strict formulas, and the old studio system crumbled. Holland-Dozier-Holland had left the Motown fold in the late sixties to start their own operation. Other artists and producers followed suit. Gordy's move, however, came at the time in Hollywood when the worlds of movies, TV, and pop music were beginning to merge. With his star protégée, Diana Ross, Gordy aimed to get a piece of the movie pie by producing *Lady Sings the Blues*.

Before Motown moved west, Los Angeles had been the major American city



least susceptible to the impact of black music. The Hollywood composers who had emigrated from Europe to toil in the film studios had established an Old World musical climate. Los Angeles, oriented to the automobile, had no vital street culture where black and white music could interact. Until the early seventies, the city's major contribution to popular music of the rock era had been the evolution of white harmonized folk- and country-rock—by groups like the Beach Boys, the Mamas and the Papas, the Byrds. The arrival of Motown changed all that.

Stevie Wonder, Motown's former boy genius, became the label's first Hollywood culture hero. Treating the synthesizer as an aural prism instead of as a cheap substitute for instruments, Wonder made *Music of My Mind* in 1972. It was the first of his sprawling conceptual albums, in which he used Motown-honed grooves and street songs as the foundations for productions that had a Hollywood sense of scale both in texture and in morale-boosting content. Wonder blended the mystiques of Ray Charles, Martin Luther King, and Cecil B. DeMille into a statesmanlike act.

Interracial musical collaborations began to proliferate. Of the many white singers and songwriters who attempted a Motown-influenced blue-eyed soul, the most gifted was the Doobie Brothers' singer-keyboardist, Michael McDonald, who sounded like a cross between Marvin Gaye and the young Ray Charles but was smoother than either. The worldwide disco explosion at the close of the seventies reaffirmed the primacy of the streamlined dance grooves that Motown had introduced fifteen years earlier. Even reduced to a computerized, unsyn-copated boom, the sound of the electric four-beat, often supporting sassy female voices, looked back to Motown, especially to the Supremes.

Stevie Wonder's statesmanship and Diana Ross's glamour represented exactly the kind of black-pop images Berry Gordy had wanted to create in the sixties but could not have brought off in a provincial capital like Detroit. Lionel Richie, Motown's newest superstar, combines some of both qualities. The former lead singer and songwriter for the pop-soul group the Commodores, which formed on the campus of Tuskegee Institute, Richie worked his way up through the remains of the old studio system, along with his producer, James Anthony Carmichael. Richie has class by Hollywood standards, because his worshipful love ballads combine a country courtliness with a Henry Mancini-like gloss of nineteenth-century romanticism. Polite and diplomatic, Richie has no rough edges, and his cross-cultural party invitation, "All Night Long," invokes global harmony with a charm as dulcet as that of Harry Belafonte's "Calypso."

BUT the star who most fully represents the marriage of Motown and Hollywood is twenty-five-year-old Michael Jackson. The Jackson 5, who signed with Motown in 1969, were Berry Gordy's last great discovery. Gordy was part of the four-man team, called The Corporation, that wrote and produced the biggest Jackson 5 hits. Even after Jackson and three of his brothers left Motown, in 1976 (CBS offered artistic autonomy), spiritually he remained part of Gordy's "family."

More than Diana Ross, Jackson embodies Berry Gordy's ideal of a total entertainer. A rubber-legged boy-man, Jackson manages to suggest Fred Astaire, Al Jolson, Diana Ross, and the Beatles rolled into one perpetually kinetic package. In 1979, Jackson recorded *Off the Wall*, his first solo CBS album, with

Quincy Jones, whom he had met on the set of the movie *The Wiz* (Jones was the musical director and Jackson played the Scarecrow). This pop landmark, which has already sold more than 7 million copies and is still selling steadily, injects the Motown formulas with swing, jazz, and symphonic orchestration, pumping the grooves with snapping, intricate rhythms that underscore Jackson's natural talent as a jazz dancer. In its energy and carefree spirit, *Off the Wall* evokes the breathlessly boyish enthusiasm of a Gene Kelly movie musical with the star leaping from scaffold to scaffold.

Thriller, Jackson's second solo album, released in December of 1982, is even more movielike, but in the style of science-fiction blockbusters like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *E.T.* On this record, the most successful album ever released, Jackson came into his own as a songwriter. "Billie Jean" and "Beat It" stretch out like Broadway production numbers, while Jackson's oddly paranoid lyrics suggest the adventures of a fragile, otherworldly sprite often misunderstood by mere mortals. The music videos of these songs have helped launch a thriving industry that may bring back the elements of the MGM musical in a home-video format.

Jackson's supernatural aura is enhanced by an appearance that doesn't seem entirely human. Along with the lacquered chic of a *Vogue* fashion model comes a voice that cracks soulfully along the seam between adolescence and manhood. If the feeling the voice projects is compellingly human—a blend of Stevie Wonder's positivism, Smokey Robinson's vulnerability, and Diana Ross's playfulness—its timbre is weirdly androgynous. With his surgically planed features, Jackson is a star who acts as though he has transcended the aging process (and with it sex and aggression) to reach a higher level of being. He is The Sound of Young America with a halo of spiritualism—Motown deified.

By blending Hollywood glamour and black street music into an all-purpose style, Motown has determined the direction of American pop in the post-rock era and has given us our national party music. In the grooves of Motown, we are sexy but well-mannered, affluent but hip, technologically sophisticated but not dehumanized. Motown embodies our happiest dream of what we'd like America to be—a racially harmonious nation sharing our good will as freely as we share our music. □

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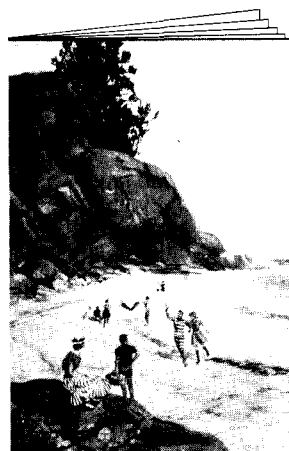
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AUDIO

POWERING COMPACT DISCS

BY PETER W. MITCHELL

THERE HAVE BEEN many exaggerated claims and misleading reports about the digital Compact Disc, a new medium for reproducing musical sound. Is it really better, or is it just another high-priced toy for audiophiles? If you buy a CD player, will you also have to invest in a new amplifier and new speakers to cope with the 90-decibel dynamic range of the CD? What basis is there for selecting one CD player over another?

The last question is easiest to answer. If you have decided to buy a Compact Disc player, it is wise to choose a 1984 model rather than one introduced in 1983, the first year of production. Most second-generation players use VLSI (very-large-scale integrated) chips to control the tracking of the laser that "plays" the disc with a beam of infrared light and provides precise decoding of the digital signal from the disc. These more complex circuits, incorporating refinements suggested by experience with first-generation players, provide better tracking of defective or accidentally damaged discs. And since fewer chips (and associated parts) are needed to make a complete player, the cost is lower.

Peter W. Mitchell is a recording and product-design engineer who writes frequently about audio, video, and computers.

On average, the newer CD players cost 30 percent less than last year's models.

The audible differences among CD players are slight, so it makes sense to base your choice mainly on price and ease of use. A few models are equipped for wireless remote control. Some have relatively simple controls and semi-automatic operation; others can be programmed to play the selections on a disc or portions of a disc in any order. One feature I recommend is "audible scan," which lets you hear the sound go by, in speeded-up form, as you scan the music with the laser; this makes it easy to cue the player precisely to the passage you want to play. Fewer than half of the CD players currently on the market allow for audible cueing. The others are silent during the scan, forcing you to depend on the track number and the elapsed-time display to find a passage.

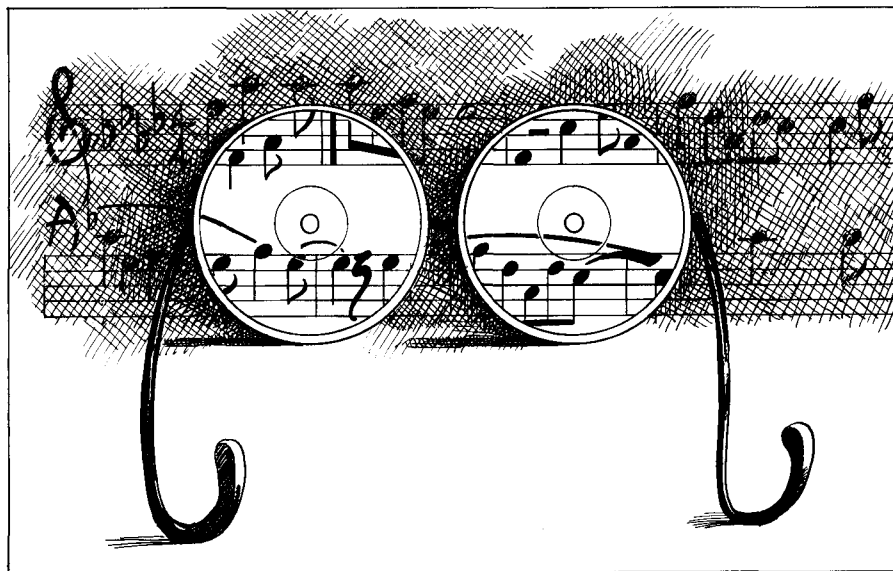
The laser on a CD player is completely safe. It is a small, low-power laser, which can't be seen unless you disassemble the unit. Moreover, it is mounted within an optical assembly that causes the laser's beam to diverge rapidly at distances greater than one millimeter from the lens surface; you would have to be a contortionist to get your eyeball within that range. In any case, it is pointless to try to see the beam. It is infrared, and so invisible.

Compact Disc players have been sold mainly to audiophiles, and the selling point has been their dramatically superior sound quality. But that may not be their greatest virtue. I find, after having lived with one for a while, that the format's convenience is an even greater attraction than its sound. No technical skill is needed either to install a CD player or to use one. There is no cartridge wiring, alignment, or tone-arm balancing, anti-skate, or tracking-force adjustment.

The discs occupy little space, don't warp, and require no special cleaning tools. Everything is on one side of the disc, which can hold more than an hour of music, allowing you to hear an entire symphony without getting up in the middle. Any part of a disc can be reached easily. Want to hear band 3? Simply press a couple of buttons; the player jumps precisely to the beginning of band 3 and plays. The silvery playing surface is imbedded within the disc beneath a transparent plastic layer. Since it is played by a beam of light, it never wears out. Minor scratches on the plastic are out of the focal range of the laser and usually have no effect. Dust and smudges can be wiped off, which makes the disc like new.

Of the sonic advantages of the Compact Disc, perhaps the most obvious is the CD's totally silent background. No low-level hiss, hum, or rumble obscures subtle overtones in the musical fabric, and no ticks and pops distract attention from the music. Equally important is the clarity of the CD, a result of its freedom from flutter and from the host of distortions that occur in LPs and tapes. As a result, listening to a CD is like looking through a freshly cleaned window: colors seem brighter, and even the smallest details gleam. The CD's clarity and transparency provide a remarkable sense of "hearing through" the playback system into the concert hall or studio where the recording was made. Sometimes the sound is a little *too* clear, exposing minor recording faults and sloppy engineering.

THE MOST WIDELY misunderstood advantage of the CD is its ability to accommodate a much greater dynamic range—the contrast between very soft and very loud sounds—than LPs and tapes can. The usable dynamic range of LP records and cassette tapes is less than 65 decibels, while that of CDs is greater than 90. Whether you need to invest in a more powerful stereo amplifier and speakers depends on what recordings you play. Your car may be capable of go-



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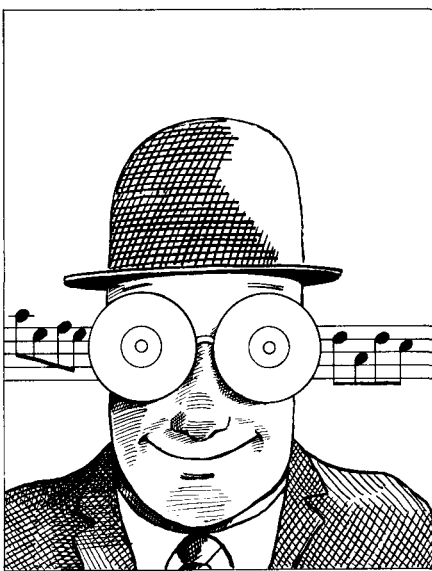
ing 100 miles an hour, but you seldom if ever drive it that fast. The CD has a 90-decibel capacity, but the dynamic range of any disc depends on its musical content—in particular, on whether the music contains dramatic soft–loud contrasts.

For most popular music, a nearly constant recording level is maintained in the studio. The range between the quietest and loudest passages is usually less than 10 decibels, whether you listen to the music on an LP, a tape, a CD, or FM. Dynamic range is likely to be a concern only if your musical preferences run strongly to classical music—particularly large-scale symphonic music and grand opera—or to big-band jazz.

As it turns out, many recording companies are putting virtually the same dynamic range on their CDs as on their LPs. The multitrack recording methods used by most major labels yield a dynamic range that is somewhat compressed relative to live sound. Polygram, the European conglomerate whose Philips and Deutsche Grammophon labels account for a large percentage of the world's classical-record sales, has a policy of limiting the dynamic range in all recordings to about 50 decibels, in order to make them acceptable for playback at home. The dynamic-range adjustments are made on the master tape by the individual record producers in conjunction with the artists. This policy takes account of the fact that most record buyers do not want to hear in their living rooms the full dynamic range that the conductor hears on the podium.

At home, the quietest pianissimos of a wide-range recording are likely to be buried beneath the noise of the refrigerator compressor, the air-conditioner, or nearby traffic. If you turn up the volume to hear the hushed passages, the next *triple-forte* climax will have you leaping from your chair to turn it down. Audiophile record labels like Telarc and Delos don't compress the dynamic range of the live sound. That range may be as great as 70 decibels, placing extraordinary demands on the amplifier and speakers used for playback. But Telarc, too, puts approximately the same dynamic range on CDs and LPs. The main difference between a Telarc CD and the corresponding LP is that on the LP the softest musical details are at the same level as the surface noise of the disc and the rumble of the turntable, whereas on the CD those quiet passages are heard against silence. The true benefit of the CD's dynamic range, then, lies in softer softs, not louder louds.

WHETHER YOU NEED a more powerful system will finally depend on how you choose to set your volume control. If you don't play CDs louder than your old records, you will be using approximately the same amount of amplifier power as before. But if the delightful clarity of the CD seduces you into playing music louder than you used to (as it very well may), then you will probably want a more powerful amplifier—much more powerful, since a noticeable increase in loudness requires at least a doubling of power. My amplifier, which puts out several hundred watts of power (most people's amplifiers are 20 or 40 watts), is barely adequate when I play the *1812 Overture* at a house-shaking volume that is even louder than the highest concert-hall levels. But a friend using a new CD



player with her 40-watt amplifier finds that its power is quite sufficient for the more conventional volume levels she enjoys.

Certain complications make it impossible to judge an amplifier's suitability for CDs merely on the basis of its rated power. One is the problem of "transients," the brief peaks at the onset of percussive sounds like drumbeats and piano chords. These are more accurately preserved on CDs than on LPs and tapes, so even when you play music at the same overall loudness level you may need extra power, but only for very brief periods. Some amplifiers—particularly those from Carver, Phase Linear, NAD, Harman-Kardon, and Soundcraftsmen—are designed with a lot of "dynamic headroom" for reproducing transients. But even if the transient peaks in CDs make your amplifier momentarily "clip"

the sound, it may not matter—if the overload is brief enough. If an amplifier has graceful overload behavior, returning instantly from a transient peak to normal without an audible hangover (some amplifiers continue to distort the sound), more brute power may not be needed. There is no standard test for this; you'll just have to listen, noting whether the sound is annoyingly harsh during loud passages.

Another complication is deep bass. The lowest frequencies are often rolled off—made weaker—in LPs and tapes, but they are present at full strength in Compact Discs. Low frequencies place a special strain on the ability of an amplifier to pass large amounts of current through its output transistors to the speakers. For this reason, a larger amplifier, or even a different model with the same power rating as your old one, may better handle the power demands of CDs. If you decide to shop for a new amplifier, look for one with a high power rating (it is a good idea to start at 40 watts) at 4 ohms, even if you have 8-ohm speakers, because the rating at 4 ohms is a good gauge of output current. The amplifiers mentioned above are noted for high current capacity as well as for dynamic headroom. But that capacity costs money. These amplifiers cost a good deal more than their weak-kneed counterparts, which distort sound when a thrilling musical climax comes along.

You will probably discover an octave of deep-bass response in your speakers that you didn't know they were capable of. Many acoustic-suspension speakers, such as the popular ones from Advent, AR, ADS, and EPI, even those produced more than a decade ago, are capable of surprisingly good low-bass reproduction when fed an adequate signal. If the woofers are smaller than eight inches in diameter, however, or if the speakers are of bass-reflex design, use caution when playing bass-heavy recordings containing the very lowest bass frequencies at high volume. Listen for nonmusical sounds that indicate misbehavior, such as buzzing or the clattering of a voice-coil against its magnet. If it sounds okay, then it is okay.

If you need to upgrade your stereo system in order to cope with CDs, it was probably overdue for upgrading anyway—it isn't doing justice to today's high-quality LPs and tapes. You might be surprised to find out how much you've been missing. □

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BOOKS



BEFORE TASTE WAS OUTLAWED

BY MARTIN AMIS

DIVERSITY AND DEPTH IN FICTION

by Angus Wilson
edited by Kerry McSweeney.
Viking, \$27.50.

"I THINK . . . SUSPECT . . . I imagine . . . I have no doubts . . . I am fairly sure . . . I believe, as I shall suggest . . . I think I would like to begin by simply saying. . ." And I think I would like to begin by simply saying that Angus Wilson's potpourri of critical writings is delightfully personal, impressively amateurish, and thrillingly unsystematic. It prompts the thought that the gurus and yogis of structuralism have done us all a great service. As criticism coagulates into a discipline in which only the academic lab man feels at ease, a new and neglected subject looms imposingly in the foreground: "It looks like literature. What a beautiful sight!" as John Updike observed in *Hugging the Shore*, a book that one places alongside other recent critical collections by Nabokov, V. S. Pritchett, and Philip Larkin. These are, of course, the artist-critics, and their authority has never seemed more natural and welcome.

Sir Angus's critical world, in particular, has a prelapsarian feel. "Most of [Jane

Austen's] defenders," he writes, from the sequestered innocence of 1962, "belong to the upper middle class and have also gone on living in a country way." We now know that most of Jane Austen's defenders belong to the academic industry and have started living in campus condominiums. David Lodge ably satirized the type in *Changing Places*: his hero, Morris Zapp, of Euphoria State University, has made a long career out of Miss Austen while privately admitting that he finds her "a pain in the ass." "Eros and Agape in the later novels, wasn't it?" Zapp asks a baffled English student. "What was the problem?" We have since moved beyond Eros and Agape to hermeneutics and syntagmatics, to *lexia* and *irrealia*, and to other dialectical imperatives—political, sexual, and ethnic. One could attribute these fragmentations to the rise of the universities and their attempt to make the study of literature, if not as hard as philosophy or physics, certainly a lot harder than geography. Or one could bluntly argue that the critical theorists (half high priests, half cultural janitors) fail to find literature very interesting, all by itself. For them it needs some gustier infusion.

Wilson has no head for theory and instinctively flouts it at every turn. It may be convenient for a critic to pretend that creative writing takes place *in vacuo*; but try telling a writer that. Wilson routinely commits the Biographical Fallacy, because he knows that the relationship between a writer's life and work, while not direct or unwavering, is there on the page, detectable in imagery as much as in content: what is Dickens without his blacking factory, or Kipling without his

boardinghouse? Wilson intentionally commits the Intentional Fallacy, because he knows that a work of art, if it is alive, will lead the author down diversions to unscheduled stops: hence pretension, hence incongruity, hence failure. And Wilson proudly commits the Subjective or Affective Fallacy, because he knows (with Nabokov) that the sole end of art is "aesthetic bliss," and that the critic's spinal cord is as vital as a tuning fork. Wilson also knows this from experience. Actually, we all know it. It is what we are thinking and feeling when we read.

Born in 1913, Wilson took up fiction and criticism relatively late in life. In his postwar evolution as a man of letters—a growth this book dramatizes—Wilson has two main influences to contend with and resist: on the one hand Bloomsbury, on the other F. R. Leavis. It is difficult for American readers to appreciate the power and ubiquity of Dr. Leavis's Thought Police during this period. It is difficult for English readers, too, let it be said. Provincial, lofty, and fierce, the Leavisites sought to reduce literature to a moral audit, an elaborate way of determining whether individual readers were or were not mature and wholesome human beings. "Literature values" were themselves illusory, Leavis asserted, because "the judgments the literary critic is concerned with are judgments of life." Thus the business of English studies was to whittle down the mass of literature into a hard core of mature and wholesome texts. As recently as 1970, you could walk into an undergraduate bed-sitter and run your eye over the pitifully denuded bookcase of an aspiring Leavisite: the English poets (with Hopkins

Martin Amis is a novelist and critic. His fifth novel, Money, will be published in England next fall.

Robert Coles on INTELLECTUALS

For many years, as I have worked, trying to understand how all sorts of families make do, often against considerable odds, I have written articles and books for interested fellow citizens. Soon enough, I have received the expected responses. But on one score I confess to perplexity, even alarm — an absence, almost total, of reaction when it comes to an entire side of my work. I refer to the descriptions I've rendered of the religious thoughts and feelings of the children and adults I've come to know.

All I need do, it seems, is come up with a social conclusion, make a psychological generalization, attempt a literary analysis, try portraying a certain kind of personal or regional life, and there are thoughtful (appreciatively or reprov- ingly so) correspondents willing to share their evaluations publicly. But when I have tried to describe how, say, an old Spanish-speaking woman from northern New Mexico, or a Southern black child, or an Appalachian white child, or a small-town working-class man happen to feel about Jesus and His words and deeds, then the result is either the silence already mentioned, or rarely, a puzzled, frustrated truculence: "I don't see why you get yourself into all that religious talk! If you're trying to prove that people are superstitious, or need a crutch, then a page is enough, not a chapter or half a book!"

In my own case, the attention given religious faith is held even more suspect because I'm a psychiatrist — and so, presumably, "educated" and "perceptive" enough (so I was told in another friendly letter!) to "know better"! I should be what an intellectual ought to be — someone who analyzes how others think and feel, who gives reasons for one or another moment of history. The civil rights struggle, for instance: I ought have kept my mind on the various "variables" that prompted it.

Meanwhile, there is this young man from Birmingham, Alabama, speaking in 1965: "I don't

know why I said no to segregation. I'm just another white Southerner, and I wasn't brought up to love integration! But I was brought up to love Jesus Christ, and when I saw the police of this city use dogs on people, I asked myself what Jesus would have done — and that's all I know about how I came to be here, on the firing line!"

Intellectuals also need to document how people's beliefs prompt them to live their lives. And I fear that when I started doing that I learned something about myself and my kind — how arrogant and self-centered we risk becoming: interested in our own heady assertions, and anxious to be the spokespersons for all those others, who don't write and teach and come up with new ideas, but who rather, try to go from one day to the next, and who yes, in large numbers indeed, keep calling on Jesus, not the intellectuals, for guidance. —from the June 1982 **NEW OXFORD REVIEW**.

If you are interested in exploring the beliefs behind the "data" — in probing the deeper religious feelings embedded in our lives, however much we try to ignore them — if you want to *understand* what moves a Martin Luther King Jr., a Lech Walesa, an Archbishop Romero, a Mother Teresa, a Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Polish Pope, a Simone Weil, a Dorothy Day, a George Orwell, then you're ready to look into the **NEW OXFORD REVIEW**. We are spearheading the renewed interest among today's intellectuals in what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." Robert Coles writes a regular column called "Harvard Diary," and like him, our writers — Juli Loesch, John C. Cort, J.M. Cameron, Arthur F. McGovern, Dale Vree, and others — express themselves with clarity, verve, style, and "heart." Published monthly, we have been praised by *Newsweek* for being "thoughtful," and the *Library Journal* predicts we will "doubtless command increasing attention."

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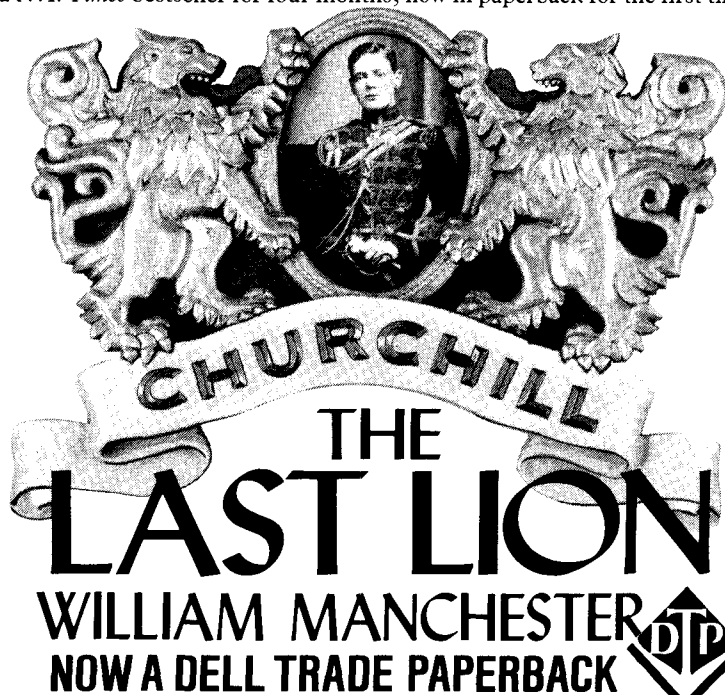
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and Carew supplanting Shelley and Milton), Jane Austen (maybe), *Hard Times*, George Eliot, James, Conrad, Lawrence, plus one or two laughable latecomers like Ronald Bottrall and Elizabeth Myers. This was the Great Tradition—that is, the one okayed by Dr. L.

It is fascinating, in the present book, to watch Wilson apparently fitting in and out of sympathy with the Leavisite doctrines. In his brilliant essay "Evil in the English Novel," Wilson uses various code words and phrases—"felt life," "anti-life," that "great tradition" again—that seem to suggest a quiet affiliation with the cause. But one soon comes to realize that Leavis-speak was merely the prevailing literary jargon of the time. Whereas Wilson, as a liberal humanist, might have been attracted to Leavis's grimly secular creed, he was too much of a literary hedonist, a man of the pleasure principle, to linger with it long. Soon Wilson's apostasy is open and eloquent. It is disturbing, he writes,

that the most suggestive and sincere literary criticism of our time should have to guard its moral health so desperately that it can find no place for the heterodoxy of Dickens's masterpieces. Perhaps the misuse of such brilliance may qualify him for the place of Lucifer—but a serious literary criticism should not be able to fall so easily into theological parody.

Literature is, among other things, a talent contest, and every reader must find his personal great tradition. Wilson's is eclectic, sometimes alarmingly so, but it is all his own.

The countervailing influence, one to which Wilson proved more lastingly susceptible, was that of Bloomsbury and its pre-eminent (perhaps its only) talent, Virginia Woolf. The ascendancy of Leavis himself might be seen as a reaction against the Bloomsbury establishment—against the snobbery, the leisure culture, the moneyed dilettantism of High Bohemia. A prosperous young aesthete (whose sexual tastes, incidentally, would have been deplored not only by Dr. Leavis but also by the British Constitution), Wilson was naturally drawn to the "feminine hypersensitivity" of Woolf rather than the "hedgehog prickliness" of Leavis. To her he owes his conception of the novel, as both practitioner and pundit. The contexts, the great forms of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sagas, have been exhausted; realism and

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experimentation have come and gone without seeming to point to a way ahead. The contemporary writer, therefore, must combine these veins, calling on the strengths of the Victorian novel together with the alienations of post-modernism. Wilson's debt to Woolf is frequently acknowledged, and we see its full emotional charge when he dramatically records: "I read in *The Times* of her suicide, and all the war and my intelligence work seemed as nothing. This was Hitler's triumph . . . the blackest moment of the war."

The hint of preciosity here reminds us, perhaps belatedly, that Bloomsbury was a narrow world, too, and that sensibility, as a credo, has its limitations. Consider these snippets, with their Woolfian airiness:

Nancy Mitford and Angela Thirkell, who attempt to reconstruct the same scene with some of the childhood laughter that rang through the nursery in the old Hall in those far-off days. . . .

Like Firbank, [Henry Green] transformed his desperate tight-rope walk into a wonderful ballet of dancing words.

Wafting from Cambridge and Bloomsbury, these seductive breezes blew across the England of the 1920s and early 1930s until they became the very atmosphere that the intelligentsia of the upper middle class breathed—a warm, enfolding air full of the breath of memories, sudden gaieties and strange little sadnesses.

The confidence of Bloomsbury lay in an assertion of taste—*taste*, with its eighteenth-century connotation of well-bred rectitude, of patrician right thinking. Just as surely as in the Leavisite doctrine, any value judgment reflects on its espouser: on his or her background, fiber, cultural etiquette. When literary criticism began to be systematized (and thus democratized) in the fifties, the value judgment was the first frippery to be outlawed; and the tendency shows no sign of being reversed, with the structuralists seeming equally happy filleting the minor or the major. If there ever was a middle ground—a still point somewhere between the overaesthetic, the shrilly moral, and the pseudo-scientific—Wilson never sought it. He had an artist's certainty, and trusted to that.

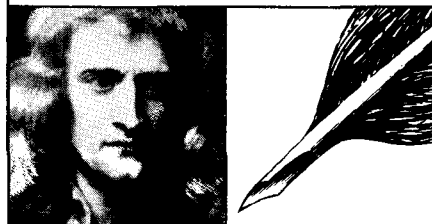
SO DIVERSITY AND DEPTH IN FICTION completes a familiar and enjoyable process. In the end, we learn more about

the judge than the judged. William Godwin's prose is "at times unendurable." Dostoevsky's ideas are "at times almost insane." Thackeray's "awful 'sweet wisdom'" is "nauseating." Gissing is often "completely unreadable," indeed "entirely repellent." "It just does not do, I think," Wilson decides, having examined the dialogue in Isherwood's *The World in the Evening*. For once he supports his view with adequate quotation. But the tone? It just does not do, I think. The tone makes its appeal to a lost consensus, a unanimity that might have existed in "those far-off days" but exists no longer in 1984.

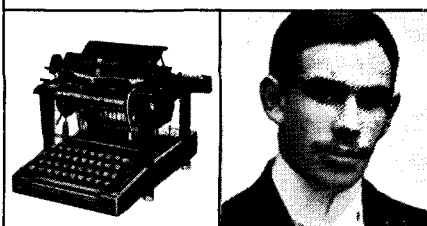
Wilson's great tradition has a nostalgic or fossilized look about it, too. Richardson's *Clarissa*, Austen, the major Victorians, Meredith ("the first great art novelist"), Huxley, Ivy Compton-Burnett ("a great experimentalist"), and John Cowper Powys ("he will stand with James, Lawrence and Joyce"): there is a sense, not at all uncongenial (and analogous to what one feels about Wilson's own fiction), that this particular "line" of English literature is losing its hold on us, though perhaps it will one day revive. Similarly, when Wilson offers his hot tips for future greatness (this is 1967), he arrives at the following selection: John Berger, David Storey, Christine Brooke-Rose, Randolph Stow, Chinua Achebe, Amos Tutuola, and—at last—V. S. Naipaul.

Amateurism is not an unalloyed virtue, and it must be said that the mandarin brio of Wilson's prose is a constant distraction. He has a kind of anti-talent for the rhyme, the repetition, the tongue-twister, the ear-clouter: "The admirable Admiral Croft," "a revolting revolutionary act," "the last thing he would have been likely to do would have been to . . ." Some passages are real so-and-sos: "It is so over-used and so often without a satisfactory content. So—this likeness between Dostoevsky and Dickens, so frequently proclaimed. . ." And we would need an editor far less torpid than Mr. McSweeney to cope with Wilson's random intensifiers: at one point we get "very shocking," "very disgusting," "very possible," "very difficult," "very definite," and "very important," all within half a page. Wilson lassoes himself into argument as if somebody else were constantly trying to thwart and bedevil him. But he is a man in love after all, and one cheerfully grants him his excitements, his imprecisions, and his fertile swiftness of thought. □

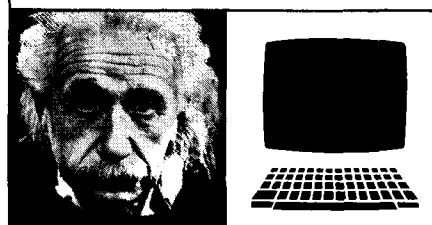
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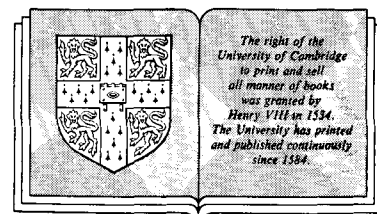
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TRIALS OF MUTUAL FREEDOM

BY RICHARD SENNETT

ADIEUX: A FAREWELL TO SARTRE
by Simone de Beauvoir
translated by Patrick O'Brian.
Pantheon Books, \$19.95.

IN THE EYES of many people, Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre led an ideal conjugal life. From the time they met as young writers, in the late 1920s, until Sartre's death, in 1980, they shared decades without marrying; they kept separate apartments, occasionally went their own ways sexually, and moved in their own circles of friends. The distance they kept made them seem unlike liberated couples of an earlier age: John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, for instance, who were intensely conscious of being rebels and clung desperately to each other. Beauvoir and Sartre seemed to move freely in the world, bound by a loving friendship that gave each of them autonomy.

Simone de Beauvoir's new book, *Adieux*, which chronicles their last decade together, should dispel this roseate picture. It is, to be sure, the portrait of a deep love between two people who led separate lives. But freedom for Sartre and Beauvoir was a condition, not a solution; being free offered them no easy

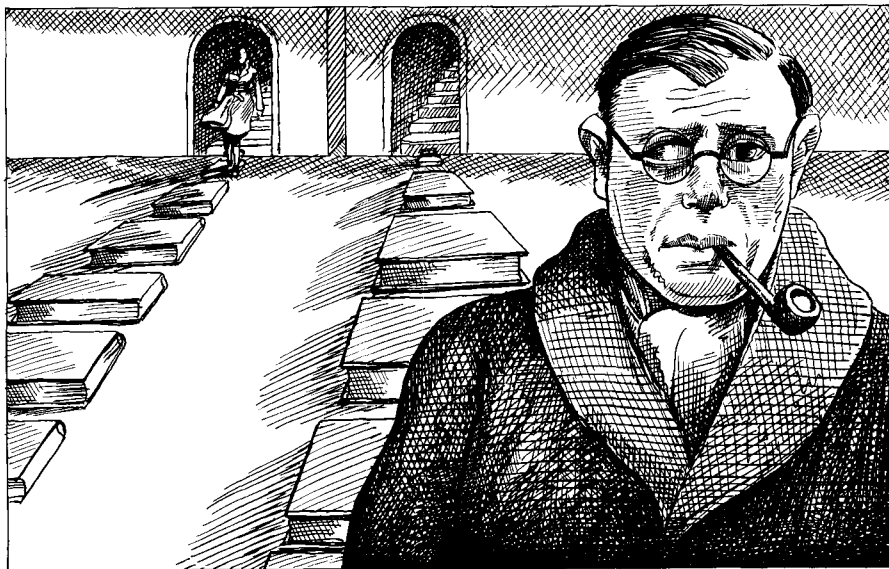
nostrums for dealing with illness, old age, depression, or betrayal. *Adieux* offers the reader a sharp-edged, probing look at the trials of maintaining mutual freedom when one of the partners is dying.

Adieux is divided into two parts. The first is a diary Beauvoir kept of her life with Sartre from 1970 to 1980. The second is a set of conversations with Sartre that she recorded in the late summer and early fall of 1974, when he was sixty-nine and she was sixty-six. The diary is largely an unflinching chronicle of Sartre's physical decay: his strokes and incontinence, the onset of his blindness, his struggles to stop drinking and smoking himself into an early grave. The interviews show what he made of his life at a point when he was no longer able to work easily—they are his summing-up. The reader expecting abstruse philosophizing by this most intellectual of couples will be disappointed (or relieved): both Sartre and Beauvoir spoke personally and directly. And though one might expect the diary of a decade of physical decline to be unreadably depressing, Beauvoir's art surmounts this problem: we become absorbed in what peace Sartre at the end of life could make with himself and with her. Beauvoir's diary entries, her questions to her lover, and her editing of his replies are intimate without being private. She renders events and persons so that they seem to speak for themselves, with little editorializing on her part. Moreover, Beauvoir has bound the two halves of the book together so skillfully that in her interview with Sartre we feel the looming crisis of his death vibrating in the turns and twists of his thought.

The diary opens with Sartre in full

possession of his powers. He was the most famous intellectual in the world; he was hard at work on his magnum opus, *The Family Idiot*, a meditation on the life and work of Gustave Flaubert; his political energies were mobilized by the upheavals that had begun in France in May of 1968. The French government was throwing young people of a variety of political stripes into jail, and in June of 1970 Sartre helped create Secours Rouge, a group whose purpose, Sartre declared, was "the political and legal defense of the victims of repression and to provide them and their families with material and moral support, no one being barred." Most of the people he was working with and aiding were thirty to forty years younger than he was, people who could have been his children or grandchildren. Most of them were Maoists, and it is important to note that *Maoïsme* in France did not at this time mean what Maoism of the Red Guard variety meant in China. Mao, to young French people, was a symbol of antibureaucratic, antitotalitarian socialism; to be a *Maoïste* was to set oneself against the slavish rigidity of the French Communist Party. This temper in the young perfectly suited the impulse in Sartre that went back to the days after the Second World War, when he was creating existentialism. Even at the beginning, Sartre sought to create a definition of freedom from inner commitment rather than external doctrine.

Part of the story that Simone de Beauvoir tells in this diary is how some young radicals began to exploit Sartre as he grew weaker, and how he lost the power to resist them, emotionally as well as physically. She does not conceal her own bitterness, but, characteristically, she lets the events speak for themselves. As radical ardor waned in France in the 1970s, those still inflamed were, as usual, ambitious. Sartre began to lend his name to projects that he was unable to influence as he might have wished. By the end, Sartre had succumbed, for instance, to a young man named Benni Lévi; they published an article together about which Beauvoir comments, "I was horrified. It had nothing to do with the 'plural thought' that Sartre had spoken of in *Obliques*. Victor [Benni Lévi's *nom de guerre*] did not express any of his own opinions directly; he made Sartre assume them while he, by virtue of [being one] who knows . . . revealed truth, played the part of district attorney." Others of Sartre's young friends turned a deaf ear to his pleas for a balanced view of Israel and



the Middle East. It was as though the ideas of the author of *Anti-Semite and Jew*, *Obliquities*, and *Being and Nothingness* counted for little; the young possessed the name Sartre, which they could use for their own purposes. To express what happened to Sartre, Beauvoir makes a play on the French phrase *détournement de mineur*, which means the abduction of a young person for immoral purposes; Sartre, she says, was subject to a "*détournement de vieillard*," the abduction of an old man.

This threat from the young also affected the course of Sartre's illness. From time to time young women appeared in Sartre's life who brought him not only pleasure but also drinks. One of Sartre's debilities was high blood pressure; he seems also to have suffered from hardening of the arteries (in Patrick O'Brian's otherwise excellent translation of this book, the medical terminology is not rendered well in English). Obviously, drinking and smoking are not good for either condition; Sartre was able to give up smoking, but to the end he drank fitfully to excess. Here is how Beauvoir describes one bout just before his death:

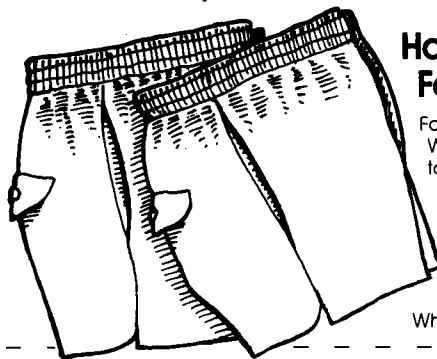
One Sunday morning at the beginning of March Arlette found [Sartre] lying on his bedroom floor with a terrible hangover. We learned that he got his various young women, who knew nothing of the danger, to bring him bottles of whiskey and vodka. He hid them in a chest or behind books. That Saturday evening . . . he had got drunk. Arlette and I emptied the hiding places, I telephoned the young women asking them not to bring any more alcohol, and I scolded Sartre vehemently.

Sartre's young woman friends were not victimizers in such incidents. They were, if anything, his pawns, his excuses for drinking. But the intrusion of these young women bringing him danger, like the more purposeful intrusion of the young men making use of him, raises the most arresting question in this diary: How is a woman living in freedom with a man, outside of marriage, to protect him when he can no longer take care of himself?

About some of Sartre's debilities Beauvoir did what any member of a family would do. She guided him to a series of doctors for his blindness, read to him, arranged for his household needs, took him on trips. But about the exploitation by the young radicals, or his exploitation of young women, she was in no position to do anything; she could not shut the door of their house, nor would she permit her-



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self to say the binding words "Give them up for my sake." Beauvoir took freedom for granted as much as he did—so much so that he could surprise her. "Sometimes he would utter very strange words," she writes. "One morning, when I was giving him his medicines, he said to me, 'You're a good wife.'" All she could do was attempt to reason with him, and often he would simply withdraw from her counsels, which their separate apartments made easy—until he collapsed from one affliction or another and she would discover him helpless. One has the strong impression in reading this diary, though Beauvoir at no point puts the thought into words, that freedom and the humiliation of these discoveries—for both of them—were inseparable.

IF THERE WAS a conundrum of love and freedom for Beauvoir in her companion's last years, there was a conundrum of self-knowledge for Sartre. What made him so great an intellectual figure was his capacity to cross boundaries: between philosophy, fiction, and drama, between politics and psychology, between knowledge and ethics. The last boundary Sartre crossed in his life was between the public and the private. He wrote an autobiography of his early years, *The Words*, and his study of Flaubert is unique in the way it shuttles between the life of a subject and his biographer. In his final decade, Sartre made an intense effort to judge his own worth, but this summary passed through the filter of his personal decline. He was ashamed of his aging, fat body, its incontinence. Unable to see, and therefore to write, he told Beauvoir, "I'm a living corpse." Sartre laid a kind of curse on himself. He sought to measure the value of his work against the fact of his mortality: if I'm dying, were the books worth writing? Every human being facing the end tries to perform this illogical addition, adding up achievement in the face of death. Sartre was unusual in that the sums involved were so large—and yet he was haunted by the fear that it had all been for nothing.

Since Beauvoir was forbidden certain acts of protection, she tried to assist him in putting his life together in his mind; in talking to him she could help him without restricting his freedom. Thus there arose the 300 pages of "Conversations with Jean-Paul Sartre" that make up the second half of *Adieux*.

The timing of these conversations influenced their content. Sartre's physical problems had somewhat stabilized in

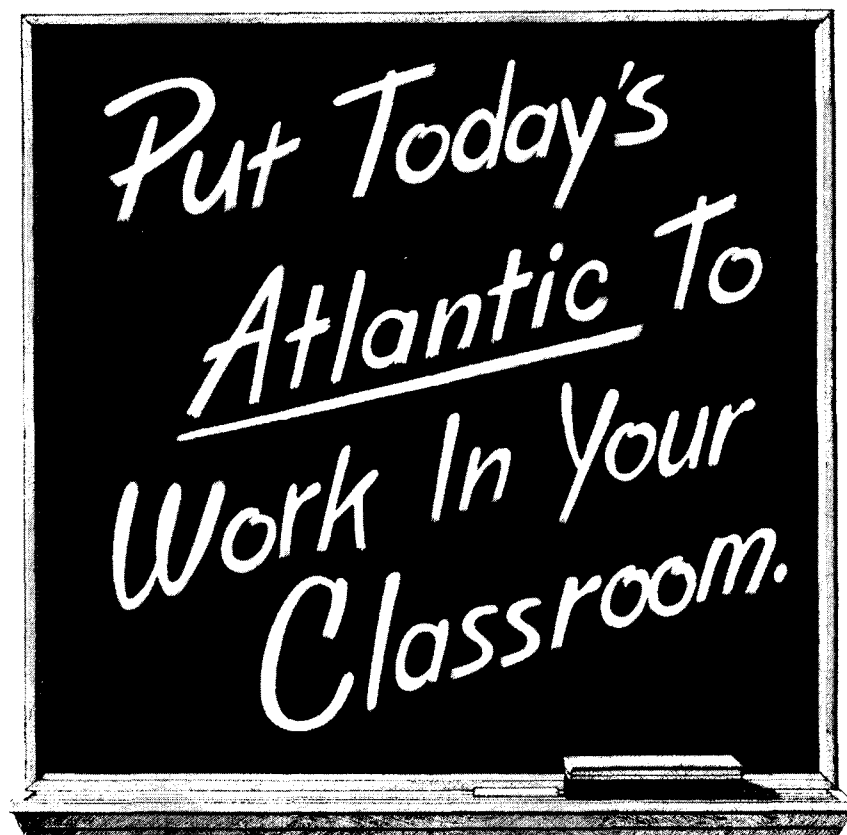
early 1974, when these conversations were held, but he was subject to bouts of depression, not only about his eyes (by this time he saw so poorly that it was difficult for him to shave) but also about a young Greek woman friend who had become insane. Beauvoir used the conversations in part to help rouse his spirits. There were moments when both of them became oblivious of the tape recorder. At one point, Sartre expressed doubt about the value of his philosophical works, and Beauvoir burst out, "They're wonderfully good!" He persisted in disparaging his writing, and she wouldn't let go until he left off feeling sorry for the wasted efforts of his life and spoke about them with more balance. When he lapsed into self-pity about his inability to keep friends, she forced him to look more closely at his relations with men like Cocteau, Genet, and Camus; again, her effort was to make him stop blaming himself and see more clearly. A personal drama was being enacted in the course of these discussions, one that gives a clue to the essential character of both speakers. Beauvoir attempted to take him out of himself, to make him think rather than succumb to the morass of his emotions; Sartre became more equable the more he succeeded in looking at his life from all sides. There was a struggle for objectivity as they talked, an objectivity that restored his sense of dignity and that was a gift of her care for him.

The conversations, Beauvoir modestly claims in a preface, do not reveal any "unexpected aspects" of Sartre. This is largely true. The themes that preoccupied him in his writing—his aversion to absolutes; his search for a philosophy of liberty that takes into account will, emotion, logic, and the contingencies of social life; the transcendence of art over philosophy—are restated rather than remade. However, of all the many interviews Sartre gave in his life, this is perhaps the clearest. And because Beauvoir had license to talk to him about everything—from his theory of vegetables ("The cooking of a vegetable is the transformation of a given object without consciousness into another object equally devoid of consciousness") to his views on the Resistance and on the early days of the existential movement—this interview makes more sense than his talks with strangers about the peculiar trauma that came to him in his last years: his troubled relations with the generations that followed him.

Traditionally, an intellectual in France

treats his own ideas like property, to be guarded with all the zeal of a landowner's defense of every square meter from incursion by others. Sartre set himself against this traditional pattern. He spoke of the freedom to accuse oneself, to let go of ideas, to change, as defining a thinker's essential dignity. This openness naturally led him to sympathize with the young who challenged their elders so fiercely. "I don't feel old," Sartre told Beauvoir rather pathetically. "I've never felt old"—which explained, he said, why he liked young people who do not have "fixed, decided opinions." On freedom versus adulthood he said, "The word adult . . . implies that you've finished your education, that you've reached the kind of calling that is suitable for an adult, that you have your own views, that you've formed the opinions that you will retain all your life—it's part of your honor to retain them." Sartre's dilemma was that on the one hand he possessed the strength to take a round, full view of issues and ideas; he was never the prisoner of a "position." This freedom to see fully he could, in concert with someone like Beauvoir, apply to himself. But on the other hand, not being a rigid person led him to identify with the young and unformed, as though in their innocence they could do no harm and would never become intellectual landowners themselves. When the reader encounters these words, spoken in 1974, and knows from the diary what they will mean in 1979 and 1980, they are chilling, words at once generous and foolish.

This book gives a probing picture of Sartre, but the more vivid presence is Simone de Beauvoir. The book's French title summarizes its sense: *La Cérémonie des Adieux*, "the ceremony of saying farewell." In part, that ceremony consists in letting Sartre speak for himself, so that at last he pronounces the healing words that end their conversations: "And yet we've lived. We feel that we've taken an interest in our world and that we've tried to see and understand it." Beauvoir's presence is felt in the act of taking his measure, in recording the sadness of his last days, which she could bear witness to but could not prevent. This unflinching honesty is her tribute to Sartre and is contained in the final words she wrote about him after his funeral: "His death does separate us. My death will not bring us together again. That is how things are. It was in itself splendid enough that we could live our lives in harmony for so long." □



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A MAN OF THE THEATER

BY LLOYD ROSE

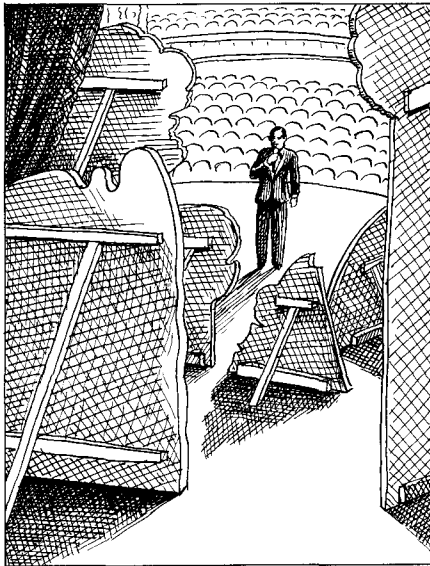
PETER HALL'S DIARIES
edited by John Goodwin.
Harper & Row, \$25.00.

SIR PETER HALL, the founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the current director of Britain's National Theatre, knows to perfection the trick of hiding behind a seeming candor. From 1972 through 1980, he kept a tape-recorded diary, which is now being published, in a version edited from more than a million words to around 170,000, as *Peter Hall's Diaries*. Many famous theatrical personalities fret and strut their hour upon the page. Sir Laurence Olivier is here, his eyebrows lowering in ambivalence over Hall's succeeding him at the National. Harold Pinter is reticently present, and the late Kenneth Tynan, waspish and clever, makes a tantalizingly brief appearance as one of Hall's major enemies.

Best of all, Sir John Gielgud and the late Sir Ralph Richardson stroll through arm in arm, like a brothers act out of vaudeville. Hall refers to them with affection and admiration as "the Old Lions," and his accounts of Gielgud's humility and hard work and Richardson's eccentricity (Hall is convinced that when he fell off Richardson's motorbike he lost a chance to direct Richardson as Falstaff, in 1963) are buoyant with delight. Describing their first tour of the new National Theatre building, he tells us, "John, who is nearly seventy, treated Ralph, who is seventy-one, as if he were an extremely aged and endearing relative up from the country, unused to city ways: 'Mind those holes. . . .' 'Don't trip over those wires.' They were both in long coats and large trilbys, Ralph sporting a stick." His description of Richardson talking through what Firs is thinking in his death scene in *The Cherry Orchard* is an extraordinary picture of a great actor at work: "Now I come through the door in my slippers. Good heavens, there's nobody here. Good Lord, they've all gone. So I go off to the window and look out. Can't see anything. So I go over to the sofa feeling very tired now, sit down,

drop my stick, too tired to take it up. So I lie back, want to put my legs up, but can't, I'm too tired. Then I die. . . ."

About himself, however, Hall is not nearly so forthcoming. This self-concealment seems built into the method by which the diaries were composed. According to his introduction, Hall, regretting that he had no record of his years with the RSC, decided that every morning between six and six-thirty he would dictate into his tape recorder his thoughts about the previous day's events. These tapes, which were to furnish the material for a book he planned to write someday about the National Theatre, were transcribed daily—for the first few years by his personal secretary, and then by his assistant at the National. Hall claims that he tried to record his experi-



ences "as honestly and factually as possible," but just how possible was it for him to be honest and factual knowing that someone was going to be listening to his taped thoughts each day? Hall surely knows that he's one of the great men of the English-speaking theater, and he must have realized that he was dictating to history. When you consider that the material has been cut to about one sixth of its original length and that anything even remotely libelous has been removed, you begin to realize just how little of Hall's personality you're getting.

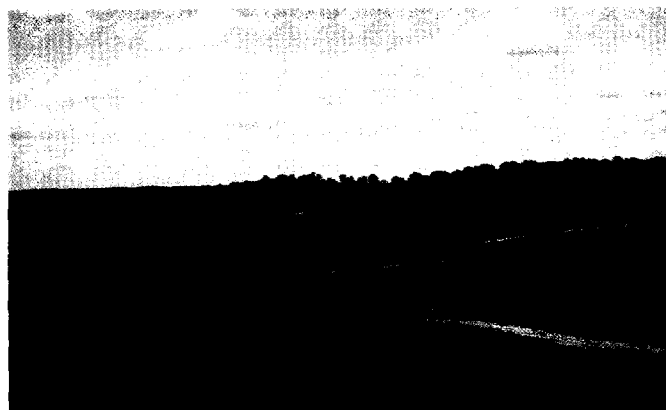
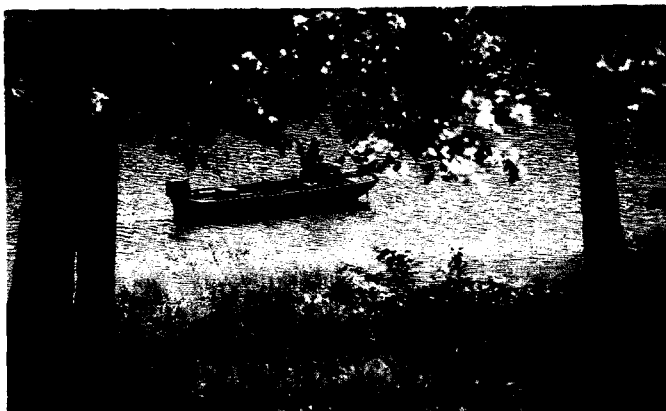
This is exasperating, because the book could have been a portrait of that rare creature the successful man of the theater. Glamorous failures enter show-business legend, but the empire builders, those men who believe in the manifest destiny of their own talents, who are mad enough to succeed but not so mad

that they destroy themselves, are the real mysteries of the theater. Hall, along with men here in America like John Houseman (whose elegant trio of memoirs provides the literary pleasures that a book like *Diaries* doesn't) and Joseph Papp, is clearly one of these. They don't give themselves away; probably that's part of their success. Houseman, for all his eloquence, is finally elusive about the exact skills that have made him what he is; a lot in his books lies behind closed doors. But he does give us a glimpse of the gambler's recklessness and the terror of boredom that have driven him throughout his life. Hall's verbal jottings are like the blueprint of a personality.

They're like the blueprint of a life, too. People are introduced and then we lose track of them, and their stories remain unfinished. The backgrounds of situations are never fully explained. The resulting impression of Hall's career is flat. There are people he admires and gets along with (Trevor Nunn, Peter Brook, Harold Pinter), people he doesn't (Kenneth Tynan, Jonathan Miller), and people about whom he has mixed feelings (Olivier). He has prodigious energy (he ran the National—a three-theater complex—and directed plays there and directed opera elsewhere almost simultaneously), and he apparently needs very little sleep. He combines odd lapses of taste (he swallowed the middlebrow posturings of *Amadeus*, which he directed) with critical insight (he recognized the dishonesty of *A Chorus Line*). Only one incident reveals his political shrewdness. He urged the National's office and front-of-the-house staff to join the powerful and radical stage-workers' union, NATKE (National Association of Theatrical, Television and Kine Employees). This bewildered a lot of people. Hall explains himself by saying that "if the majority of our people are non-union members their lives will be run by the small groups of union people, mostly stage staff, who band together for strength." What he doesn't say is that getting a moderate majority into a union is a good way to limit the power of its more extreme members, though one may guess that that was his idea. (It didn't work.) This is one of the only indications in *Diaries* of the guile and tough-mindedness that must have helped Hall to succeed as he has.

Yet, in its way, *Diaries* does end up being a portrait of Hall. An environment describes the creature that lives in it, and *Diaries*, with its tumble of detail, makes

Lloyd Rose is the literary manager of the New Playwrights' Theatre, in Washington, D.C.



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clear how overgrown with political wrangling and bureaucratic frustration the landscape of the theater is. The business of theater is not about art or even about business. It's about the craziness of trying to run something that is at the mercy of dozens of variables (everything from an actor's health to a newspaper strike), all of which are interdependent, as if it were an ordinary sort of organization. Working in the theater is one of the more insane forms of gambling, and those who succeed at it have to love living on the edge, have to be stimulated as much by the chance of failure as by the desire for success. Hall, overextending himself consistently in the face of criticism and exhaustion, is one of the highest of high rollers. Like all great gamblers, he has enormous stamina and iron egotism. Not in his own words, finally, but by approvingly quoting from Mervyn Peake's *How to Draw*, he lets us know as much about himself as he probably ever will, and maybe as much as he needs to: "It is for you to leave the spectator no option but to see what you liked; the curves or the jaggednesses; the outline shape or the shadowy patterns . . . whatever it may have been, the drawing must be about that—your choice; give him none." □

BRIEF REVIEWS



DEMOCRACY by Joan Didion. *Simon & Schuster*, \$13.95. This terse, savage novel recounts the dismal effects of financial and political corruption on a woman born into the former and married into the latter. The episodes are disjointed, reported by a journalist (frankly called Joan Didion) who manages to be underfoot when anything of interest happens to the heroine anywhere from Long Island to Jakarta. It is an unusual way to construct a novel, but the method works because the milieu that the author describes is itself a disjointed, far-flung muddle of hypocrisy, stupidity, obfuscation, and underhand maneuver, while the details of manners and settings that she provides are sharply convincing. The framework underlying this very contemporary tale is a solid antique. The distressed damsel (she is a middle-aged woman with two horrid children and a tiresome

husband) is rescued by her devoted knight (his armor is heavily tarnished, but serviceable). Whether viewed as a general denunciation of American society or as a specifically feminist complaint, Ms. Didion's book is striking, provocative, and brilliantly written.

IN A PATCH OF FIREWEED by Bernd Heinrich. *Harvard University Press*, \$18.50. Professor Heinrich is a zoologist, particularly notable for studies in the physiology of insects. His memoir explains, with great charm, how he came to devote his life to such projects as measuring the temperature of wasps and swindling gullible beetles with phony dungballs. The explanation is simple. He loves to be out of doors, preferably in wildish country, is insatiably curious about what he finds there, and wants to learn more about it. Since one is not, in these degenerate times, likely to make a living by sitting on a log between bouts of hunting and fishing, Professor Heinrich has found a way to prosper in the academic world by doing exactly what he most enjoys doing. He is a man to be envied. He is also delightful company.

THE DAY WE BOMBED UTAH by John G. Fuller. *New American Library*, \$16.50. The Army and the Atomic Energy Commission have steadily denied that the atomic-bomb tests conducted in Utah in the 1950s damaged either animals or people. The practical evidence that they did enormous damage—from immediate and ruinous livestock losses to a fantastic rise in cancer cases—continues to accumulate, and victims are back in court seeking redress. Mr. Fuller has carefully reported the whole gruesome story, including the revelation that officials concealed evidence and suborned witnesses in earlier trials. His horrifying account leaves one with the suspicion that the most dangerous atom-armed enemy threatening United States citizens is the United States government.

NOP'S TRIALS by Donald McCaig. *Crown*, \$14.95. Mr. McCaig's prose appears to be designed for ten-year-olds. His sheep-dog characters address each other as "thou" and prattle of "working woolies." These obstacles are repulsively evident in the first pages of his novel, but the reader who surmounts them will enjoy a fine suspense story about a Virginia farmer in pursuit of his stolen dog. The author's monosyllabic style proves capable of sophisticated effects, and the peripheral information he provides ranges from the operation of sheep-dog trials to misuse of a fire hose.

Talking dogs are a small price to pay for a story as good as this one.

A WRITER'S IRELAND by William Trevor. *Viking*, \$25.00. Ireland has produced such a large number of writers that one rather wonders how people passed the time there before they discovered the Roman alphabet. Since that discovery, authors have proliferated so widely that Mr. Trevor has been able to create what amounts to a guidebook of the whole island simply by discussing the areas where writers lived or about which they wrote—and the Irish have shown an exceptional enthusiasm for writing about their country. Mr. Trevor is generous with quotations and courteously restrained on the thorny subject of politics. His handsomely illustrated book is an attractive, informal history of Irish literary achievement in both Gaelic and English.

ENDERBY'S DARK LADY by Anthony Burgess. *McGraw-Hill*, \$14.95. A few years ago, in *The Clockwork Testament*, Mr. Burgess killed off Enderby the poet, but the fellow has recrudesced. He has, it seems, written a deliciously learned and comic yarn involving Shakespeare, Jonson, and the Gunpowder Plot, and as a result has been hired to provide the libretto for a musical about Shakespeare and that perennial teaser the Dark Lady. This unpromising show is being concocted in Indiana, a state that Mr. Burgess claims he does not know very well and one that he would be wise to avoid in future, for the cultural outrages he has there contrived for the torture of poor Enderby and the English language are not likely to endear him to the natives. Alien readers will howl with laughter, however, and, in truth, the whole debacle could plausibly be set almost anywhere. The theatrical catastrophe is followed by an excursion into science fiction, quite irrelevant unless one assumes that it is Enderby's attempt to placate Shakespeare's ghost, which he suspects of taking a vengeful interest in his affairs. The notion that Shakespeare's monumental curse extends to triflers with his reputation as well as movers of his bones does, in the end, tie together the three stories that constitute this wickedly amusing book.

SMITH AND OTHER EVENTS by Paul St. Pierre. *Beaufort*, \$16.95. Mr. St. Pierre's short stories are set in Canadian cattle country and populated by ranchers who manage to survive despite arctic winters, droughty summers, exasperated wives, er-

rant government bureaucrats, and the natural malignity of horses. The tales occur in the mid-twentieth century, but except for the presence of unreliable motor vehicles and a few formerly unprintable words, they might have been written by Owen Wister. This comparison is not intended as denigration. Wister was skillful with short stories, handily managing setting, characters, action, and emotional effect. Mr. St. Pierre is equally adroit, and better than Wister at dealing with women and Indians.

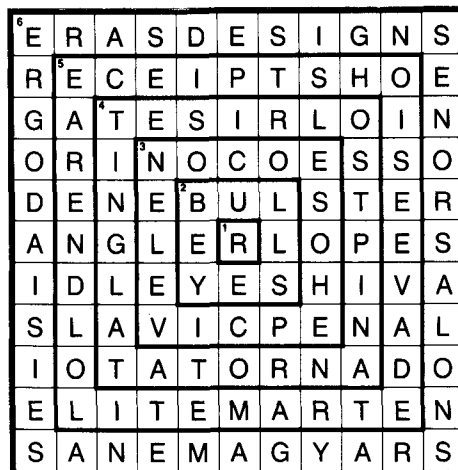
STRIKE TWO by Ron Luciano and David Fisher. Bantam Books, \$14.95. A major-league baseball umpire takes the field with three allies against a small army of meddling trainers, obstructive coaches, devious players, and demented managers plus, at any given moment, half the fans in the park. The umpire views all of them as @%#&\$%, and the opinion is reciprocated. An umpire's life should therefore be miserable, but as Mr. Luciano recalls his, it is outrageously and unpredictably comic. No baseball lover should miss it.

ANNA'S BOOK by George MacBeth. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$16.95. There was, in the 1890s, a Swedish attempt to reach the North Pole by balloon, and Mr. MacBeth has based a novel on that ill-conceived affair. The story is told alternately through the journal-letter of a scholarly young man, nephew of August Strindberg, who is on the expedition and the recollections of his fiancée, a high-spirited young woman who despises balloons in general and the *Eagle* in particular. Mr. MacBeth, an eloquent and witty writer, makes these frustrated lovers thoroughly interesting people and their adventures at home in Sweden or adrift in the Arctic equally absorbing.

QUEEN LUCIA by E. F. Benson. Harper & Row, \$3.95. The late E. F. Benson wrote a series of novels about wealthy English drones busy at social one-upmanship. Nothing that Lucia and her enemy, Miss Mapp, did was ever of the slightest importance, but they did it with Napoleonic strategy, Attilan ferocity, and Satanic motive. Benson made malicious comedy out of the pair. The whole saga, of which this is the first episode, is being reissued in paperback for the pleasure of new readers and the relief of old admirers. It is a sad fact that Benson borrowers usually become nonreturners.

—Phoebe-Lou Adams

Answers to the April Puzzler, "TARGET PRACTICE"



1a. ANG(L)ER (anag. + l) b. EPI-CURE (pie anag.) 2a. ULSTER (anag.) b. D(I-SOB)EY c. SPRAG (anag.) d. Y(E)SHIVA (anag. + e) e. LOPES (slope with first letter put last) f. S-TROLL g. DENEb (hidden) 3a. SLAVIC (anag.) b. SE(v)EN c. IDLE (homophone) d. PENAL (anag.) e. (s)ESSO(l) (rev.) f. (m)ELE(VAT)E (a TV anag.) g. OR-IN-O-CO h. (a)ISLES i. (st)O.(HEN)RY j. I-TEM (met rev.) k. COM(e)-A 4a. SI(R)LO-IN b. AC(T)ING c. I-OT-A (rev.) d. LA-TIN e. G-HOST f. G-ATE g. TORN-A-DO h. PIN-A-TA(il) 5a. R(EAR) END b. E-VADER c. M(ART)EN d. LOLA (hidden) e. SHOE (anag.) f. NO(I)SE g. EL-ITE (tie anag.) h. R-ECEIP-T (rev.) 6a. DE(S)IGNS b. DAIS(I)ES c. MAGYARS (anag.) d. SANE (homophone) e. ERGO (rev.) f. S(A-L)ONS g. SENOR (anag.) h. ERAS (double def.)

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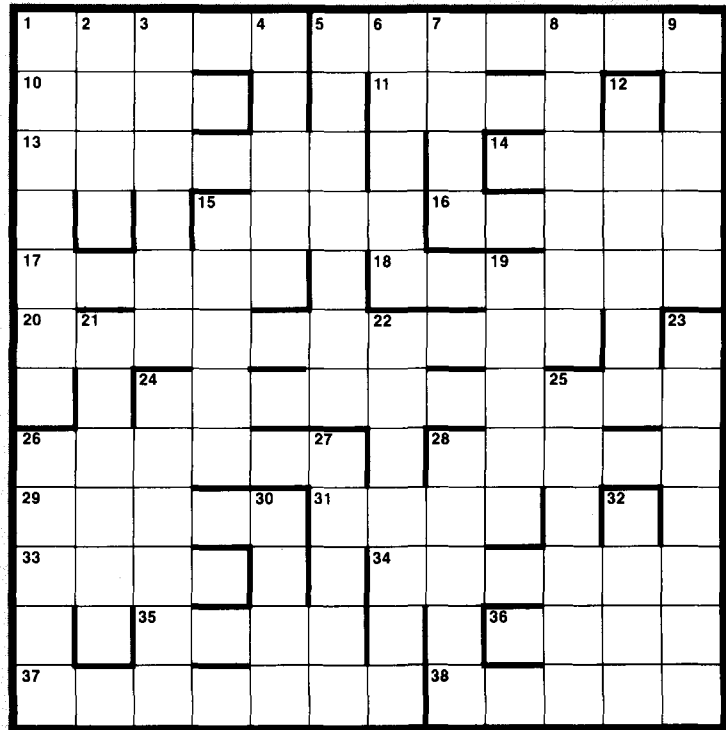
THE ATLANTIC PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

PROCRUSTEAN BED

Like the bedroom guests of the legendary Procrustes, every clue must be shortened or stretched to fit into its resting place in the grid. Every alteration is made by dropping or adding a single letter at the front or back of an answer, always forming a new word to be entered in the diagram. Clue answers include four proper nouns; diagram entries include seven proper nouns.

The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 123.



ACROSS

1. Bee workers in ditches
5. Dries a fluid up
10. Metallic noise in prison
11. Time of wind song
13. Outlaws eating an American fruit
14. Wash lance off
15. Sneak \$100 to spy from the other side
16. Hardy is a patriot
17. Our uncle has left sock
18. Group of 50 caught by Wild West general
20. Outside of New Hampshire, experimentally operate with a kind of surgery (*hyphenated*)
24. Revoke order on damn truce
26. In tidal wave, Navy is carried
28. Family member cracked a nut

29. Mouthpieces for computer info
31. Boat comes from receding waters
33. Bad men do something evil
34. Point to ump with hesitation
35. Hammer with no head on shelf
36. Hat with dubious merit
37. Rescuer cradles head of little fawn
38. Odd new rocks on the ground

DOWN

1. Within limit, train makes connection
2. String in wet tangles
3. Softball team fit with sufficient defense?
4. Heated conflict with military's leader
5. Table overturned in crooked room
6. Tomb with large stones
7. Pat's endless worries
8. Desperately hate the middle of "The Wasteland"
9. Lunatic rode in with moolah
12. Land, for crying out loud
15. A newscast's debut televised soon
19. Gin is run in spigot
21. Dressed in a toga, fellow dropped out of Roman bed
22. Prize in astrophysics
23. Coin phrase at last: "color-focused"
24. Translate "merci" wrong
25. Bungling assault nets fast five bucks
26. A poem's about bee dwellings
27. Rock's sound is fresher
28. Hills of a strange sort
30. Circles mature Indian
32. Measure top of maple tree inaccurately

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.



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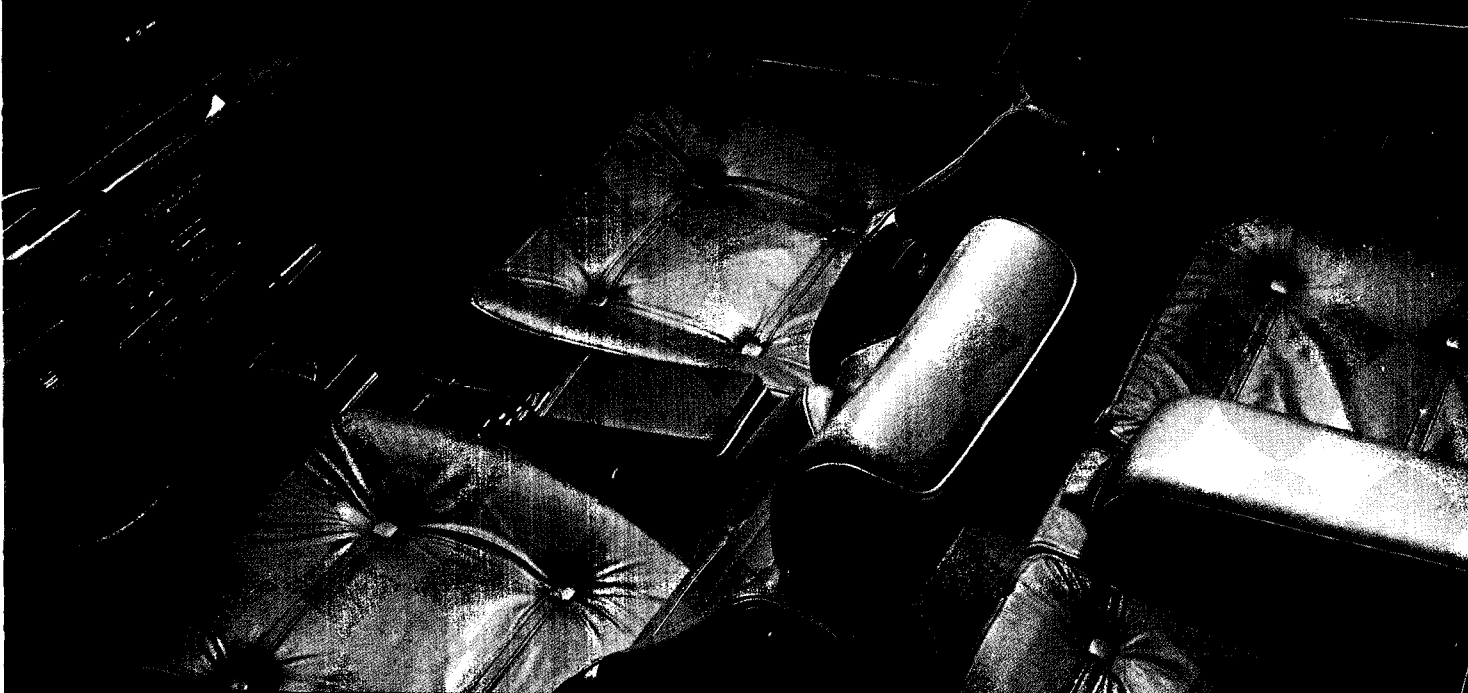
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When you slip into a Maxima, the luxury is obvious. Choose optional, sumptuous leather or rich velour, a power driven sunroof, a digital dash with graphic read-outs. Enjoy conveniences like the vocal warning system, power windows, door locks and antenna.

Listen to the eight speaker stereo that includes a cassette deck with Dolby. Available in either sedan or wagon models.

And when you drive it, the performance is striking. A fuel-injected six cylinder engine whisks you away on fully independent suspension. Everything about the new Maxima tells you. This is more than a luxury car. This is Major Motion.

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***MAJOR MOTION
FROM NISSAN***



Just a word about the price of The Glenlivet. Preposterous.

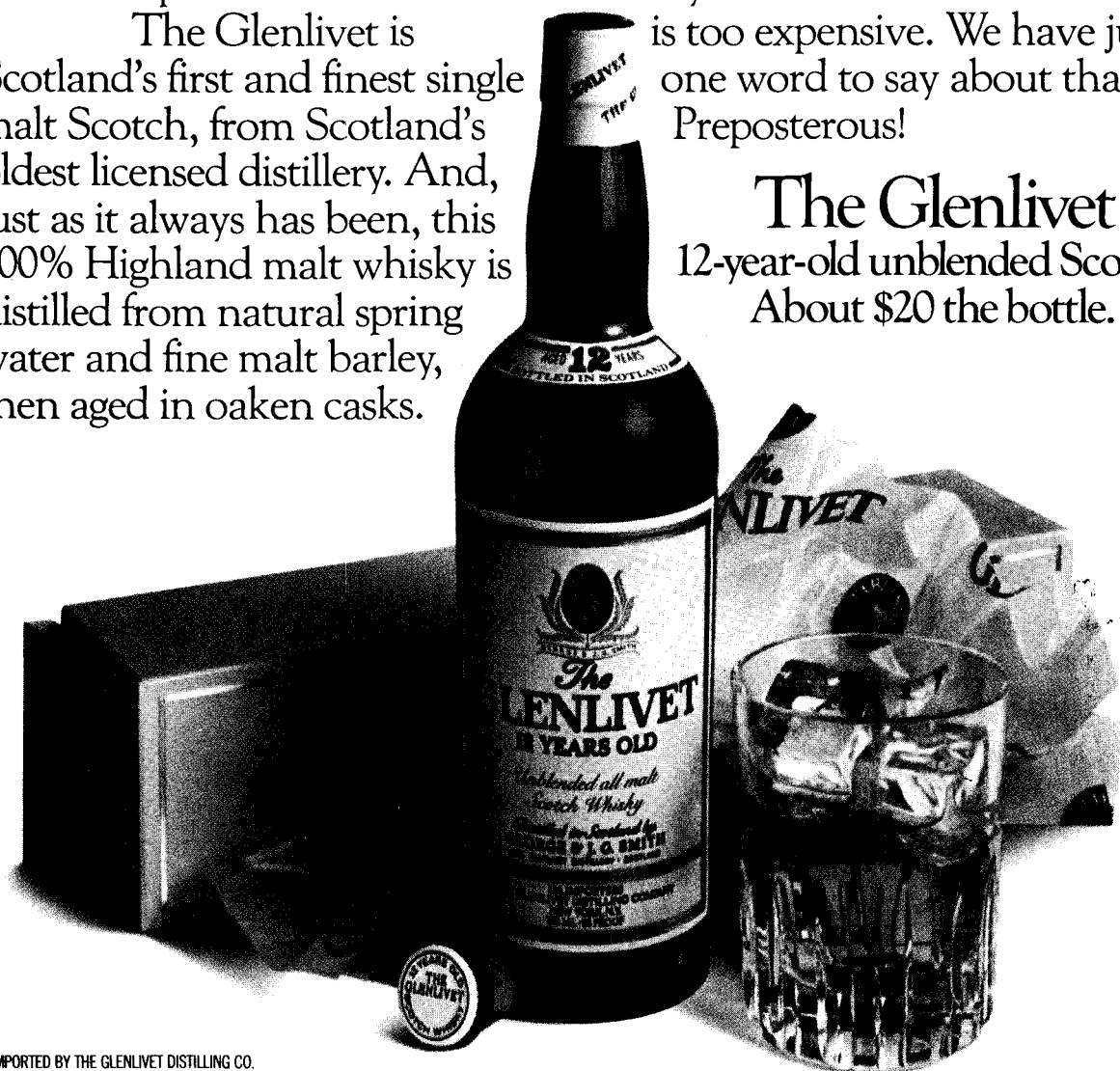
Is the premium we place on The Glenlivet really so outlandish? No more so than the premium placed on great vintage wines and fine champagne cognacs. The reason? Taste. Just one sip and you'll know that The Glenlivet has a taste that's without equal.

The Glenlivet is Scotland's first and finest single malt Scotch, from Scotland's oldest licensed distillery. And, just as it always has been, this 100% Highland malt whisky is distilled from natural spring water and fine malt barley, then aged in oaken casks.

Only The Glenlivet's time-honored methods can achieve this unequaled taste. A taste that sets us apart. Its smoothness, body and bouquet are qualities found only in this unique Scotch.

Of course, some people may still insist that The Glenlivet is too expensive. We have just one word to say about that. Preposterous!

The Glenlivet
12-year-old unblended Scotch.
About \$20 the bottle.



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